



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 168 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

4 January 2008

Śrī Saphalā Ekādaśī, 11 Nārāyaṇa, 521 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,022

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TIME, PLACE, AND CIRCUMSTANCE

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



The method of worship — chanting the mantra and preparing the forms of the Lord — is not stereotyped, nor is it exactly the same everywhere. It is specifically mentioned in this verse

that one should take consideration of the time, place and available conveniences. Our Krishna consciousness movement is going on throughout the entire world, and we also install deities in different centers. Sometimes our Indian friends, puffed up with concocted notions, criticize, “This has not been done. That has not been done.” But they forget this instruction of Narada Muni to one of the greatest *vaiṣṇavas*, Dhruva Maharaja. One has to consider the particular time, country and conveniences. What is convenient in India may not be convenient in the Western countries. Those who are not actually in the line of *ācāryas*, or who personally have no knowledge of how to act in the role of *ācārya*, unnecessarily criticize the activities of the ISKCON movement in countries outside of India. The fact is that such critics cannot do anything personally to spread Krishna consciousness. If someone does go and preach, taking all risks and allowing all considerations for time and place, it might be

that there are changes in the manner of worship, but that is not at all faulty according to *śāstra*. Srimad Viraraghava Acharya, an *ācārya* in the disciplic succession of the *Rāmānuja-sampradāya*, has remarked in his commentary that *caṇḍālas*, or conditioned souls who are born in lower than *sūdra* families, can also be initiated according to circumstances. The formalities may be slightly changed here and there to make them *vaiṣṇavas*. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 4.8.54)

Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu wanted to invent a way to capture the *Māyāvādīs* and others who did not take interest in the Krishna consciousness movement. This is the symptom of an *ācārya*. An *ācārya* who comes for the service of the Lord cannot be expected to conform to a stereotype, for he must find the ways and means by which Krishna consciousness may be spread. (Purport to *Cc. ādi.* 7.31-32)

It is the concern of the *ācārya* to show mercy to the fallen souls. In this connection, *deśa-kāla-pātra* (the place, the time and the object) should be taken into consideration. (Purport to *Cc. ādi.* 7.38)

The teacher (*ācārya*) has to consider time, candidate and country. He must avoid the principle of *niyamāgraha* — that is, he should not try to perform the impossible. What is possible in one country may not be possible

in another. The *ācārya*'s duty is to accept the essence of devotional service. There may be a little change here and there as far as *yukta-vairāgya*, proper renunciation, is concerned.... The essence of devotional service must be taken into consideration, and not the outward paraphernalia. (Purport to Cc. *madhya* 23.105)

These are the secrets of the *ācāryas*. Sometimes they conceal the real purpose of the Vedas and explain the Vedas in a different way. Sometimes they enunciate a different theory just to bring the atheists under their control. (Cc. *madhya* 25.42)

Buddhist philosophy is incomplete, but that does not mean Lord Buddha did not know the complete truth. A teacher may have received his Master's degree, yet he still teaches the ABC's to his students. It is not that his knowledge is limited to the ABC's. Similarly, any especially empowered incarnation (*śaktyāveśa avatāra*) will preach God consciousness according to time, place, and circumstances. The teacher holds his Master's degree, but the students may not be qualified to receive the high instructions that the teacher is competent to teach. (A *Second Chance*, chapter 11)

God, or a particular representative of God, comes to teach people in different circumstances. According to the circumstances there may be some difference in explanation, but the primary factor remains the same. (Lecture in Seattle, 2 October 1968)

The Vedas instruct us that knowledge must always be considered in terms of *deśa-kāla-pātra*. *Deśa* means "circumstances," *kāla* means "time," and *pātra* means "the object". We must understand everything by taking these three elements into consideration. (*Life Comes from Life: The First Morning Walk*, April 18, 1973)

A *vaiṣṇava* who is preaching may do it in a different way. According to time, place and the party, some change is required. But we have to see the essence. ... Just like we sometimes consult a dictionary, a small pocket dictionary, and a big international dictionary. Both are dictionaries.

But, *deśa-kāla-pātra*, for a small child that small dictionary is sufficient. (Lecture in Mayapur, 8 October 1974)

An *ācārya* gives some way for simple understanding. They give the same conclusion, but, according to the time and circumstances, they give a very easy method to understand. That is *ācārya*. *Ācārya* is one who strictly follows the previous *ācārya*, but according to the circumstances he may make little changes. However, they do not change the original idea. (Lecture in Mayapur, 19 February 1976)

It is important that we preach the message of Krishna Consciousness exactly as we have heard it from our spiritual master. The same philosophy and spirit must be there exactly. Just like we preach in this country exactly as we have heard from our spiritual master, but there are changes due to the time, circumstances, and the trainees. The spirit of the disciplic succession may not be changed, but there may be adjustments made to suit the special circumstances. (Letter to Sivananda, 23 January 1969) ❀

FRAGRANCE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan

**Govinda Bhāṣya commentary on
Vedānta-sūtra 2.3.13.26**

vyatireko gandhavat tathā hi darśayati

Scripture explains that as a fragrance is in a different place [from the fragrant object], so [the consciousness] is also in a different place [from the soul].

PURPORT: As the fragrance of a flower or other object may travel to a place far from its source, so the consciousness that emanates from the soul may travel from the heart and enter the head, feet, or other parts of the body. The *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* (3.6) explains:

prajāñyā śarīraṁ samāruhya

By consciousness, [the soul] pervades the entire material body.

But even though a fragrance may travel very far, it is never actually separated from its

source, just as the light of a jewel is also not separated from its source. ❀

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WHO IS GURU?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta

Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

One who does not speak anything other than *hari-kathā*, who does not instruct others to do anything but serve Hari, and who does not himself engage even for a moment in any activity other than such service, is qualified to be a spiritual master. An insincere hypocrite cannot be guru. One who aspires for mundane activities cannot become a spiritual master. Pseudo-spiritual masters should be exposed. If a spiritual master utilizes the ingredients collected by his disciples — the wealth, alms, etc. — for his own enjoyment, or simply to accumulate gold, women, and fame, his disciples should totally reject such a spiritual master, knowing him to be a cheater. We should not hear anything from such dishonest persons. A person who usurps the ingredients meant for Krishna's service can never be called a spiritual master. The *Nārādīya Purāṇa* states:

*ihā yasya harer dāsyē karmaṇā manasā girā
nikhīlāśv apy avasthāsu jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*

A person acting in Krishna consciousness with his body, mind, intelligence, and words, is a liberated person even within the material world, although he may be engaged in many so-called material activities.

We need not associate with the atheists who have come to engage in social service rather than Krishna's service. Such people can benefit neither themselves nor others. While performing social service, they fall into *māyā's* pit and make others fall into that pit also. We do not associate with those who make a show of chanting the holy names on beads just to cheat the Lord, or who raise a great hue and cry yet do not see Krishna in every sound vibration and Gaurasundar in every utterance. The goal of all knowledge is to develop our relationship with Krishna.

If we develop a propensity to serve the Lord under the spiritual master's order, in the association of devotees, we will learn to see the entire world as made for the Lord's service. We will then utilize everything we see for that service and thus attain auspiciousness. If we associate with and serve that great personality who sees the Lord everywhere, who sees everything in relation to the Lord, who sees his spiritual master everywhere, who thinks himself humbler than a blade of grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, who does not desire respect for himself, who is always ready to respect others, and who in this way constantly chants the Lord's holy name, then the path to perfection will open. Simply out of good fortune we obtain such a bona fide spiritual master. We cannot reach Gaurasundar's shelter by accepting a servant of Maya as our spiritual master, thus maintaining our enjoying spirit.

Although Sri Gaurasundar may not currently be present in this world, if we sincerely associate with guru and the *vaiṣṇavas*, dovetailing our mentality with the mentality of such *vaiṣṇavas* — if we mix our desire with their desire — then we will, by the mercy of Sri Gaurasundar, certainly attain auspiciousness. If we can take complete shelter at the lotus feet of a spiritual master who is conversant with the science of Krishna, then by his proper association, service, and subordination we will attain ultimate benefit. ❀

— *Amṛta Vani*. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. Page 55.

IRRESISTIBLE DEATH

Viṣṇu Smṛti 20.38-44

*dṛṣtvā lokam anākrandaṁ mṛiyamāṇānīs ca bāndhavān
dharmam ekaṁ sahāyārthaṁ varayadhvaṁ sadā narāḥ*

Having seen that no help is to be had from this world and that your relations are dying [one after the other], one should choose virtue for one's only association.

*mṛto 'pi bāndhavaḥ śakto nānugantuṁ naraṁ mṛtam
jāyā-varjaṁ hi sarvasya yāmyaḥ panthā virudhyate*

Even if they were to die together, a kinsman is unable to follow a dying relative. Except for a wife, all others are forbidden to follow a dying person on the path of Yamaraj.

*dharma eko 'nuyāty enaṁ yatra kva-cana gāminam
naṁ asāre nṛ-loke 'smin dharmam kuruta mā ciram*

Virtue alone will follow one wherever he may go. Therefore, do your duty unflinchingly in this wretched world.

*śvaḥ kāryam adya kurvīta pūrvāhṇe cāparāhṇikam
nā hi pratikṣate mṛtyuḥ kṛtaṁ vāsya na vākṛtam*

Tomorrow's business should be done today, and the afternoon's business in the forenoon; for whether a person has done it or not, death will not wait.

*kṣetrāpaṇa-grhāsaktam anyatra gata-mānasam
vṛkīvoraṇam āsādy mṛtyur ādāya gacchati*

While one's mind is absorbed in one's agricultural field, the traffic on the road, ones home, or some other beloved object, death suddenly carries one away as his prey, just as a wolf catches a lamb.

*na kālasya priyaḥ kaścid dveṣyaś cāsya na vidyate
āyusye karmaṇi kṣiṇe prasahya harate janam*

Time is no ones friend and no ones enemy: when the effect of his acts in a former existence, by which his present existence is caused, has expired, he snatches a man away forcibly.

*nā prāpto-kālo mriyate viddhaḥ śara-śatair api
kuśāgraṇā 'pi saṁsprṣṭaḥ prāpta-kālo na jīvati*

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir

National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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One will not die before their time has come, even though they are pierced by a thousand shafts; nor will one live after their time is expired, even if they are merely touched by a blade of grass. ❧

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DEDICATION TO GURU

Agastya-samhitā, quoted in

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (4.367-371)

*ye guru ājñāṁ na kurvanti pāpiṣṭhāḥ puruṣādhamāḥ
na tesāṁ naraka-klesa-nistāro muni-sattama*

*yaiḥ śiṣyaiḥ śaśvadārādhyā guravo hy avamānitāḥ
putra-mitra-kulatrādi-sampadbhyaḥ pracyutā hi te*

O best of the sages, those low sinful persons who don't obey their guru's orders will never get relief from the agonies of hell. They will lose their children, friends, wealth, wife, and family.

*adhikṣipya gurum mohāt puruṣaṁ pravādanti ye
śūkaratvaṁ bhavaty eva teṣāṁ janma-śateṣu api*

Those persons who out of ignorance chastise the guru and think him to be an ordinary person will have to take birth as pigs for one hundred lives.

*ye guru-drohiṇo mūḍhāḥ satatam pāpa-kāriṇāḥ
tesāṁ ca yāvat sukṛtaṁ duṣkṛtam syān na saṁśayaḥ*

*ataḥ prāg gurum abhyarcya kṛṣṇa-bhāvena buddhimān
tryavarāṇasamān kuryāt praṇāmān daṇḍa-pātavat*

Those who behave defiantly toward their guru will perpetually be bound to commit sins. There is no doubt that all of their piety will turn into sins. Therefore, intelligent persons should first worship their guru while treating him or her as non-different from Krishna. They should offer prostrated obeisances (*daṇḍavat praṇāms*) to and worship their guru at least three times a day. ❧

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19 January 2008

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The poet Prema Das

REFORM IS BETTER THAN REJECTION

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



It is better to correct him to the standard point by friendly gestures. We can reject anyone — that is very easy — but to reform him requires great skill and tact. If you can reform him by kind words and dealings, that is best. When I was there in Sydney, I observed that _____ is a very, very good boy, and that he has great intelligence and talent. Simply it has become a little misguided due to circumstances. Now you big leaders in Australia, along with the others, should make a concerted attempt to help him over his difficulties. Persuade him that everything is all right and that I am not angry or displeased in any way. Tell him that these things will sometimes happen even with the best devotees. In this way try and persuade him to become engaged with his previous enthusiasm for becoming a great devotee. He is a young boy, so we should not take his actions too seriously. Better to forget the past and try to reform him. His service can once again be very valuable there in Australia. I know that he is a very good boy. Do not drive him away — that will be a discredit to

all of you leaders. If there is great difficulty, for the time being he may come and live with me here in Los Angeles. I have no objection. But he has done very nicely in Sydney up to the present time, so if you can utilize his experience and talents there, that is the best plan. ❀

— Letter to Madhudvisa and Amogha. 24 August 1972.

KRISHNA'S SATISFACTION

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

If someone can satisfy Krishna, then automatically he can satisfy one and all. There will be no dissatisfaction. But how many of you are trying to satisfy Krishna? You may say, "Yes, we are all trying. We are all working for Krishna's satisfaction. We are all engaged in loving devotional service to Krishna." But if we are engaged in loving service to Krishna, then why are we feeling dissatisfaction? Are you really satisfying Krishna? The *Gītā* says and the *Bhāgavatam* says. The *vaiṣṇavas* and gurus have been teaching you this every day — *yuktasya bhaktāṁś ca niyuñjato 'pi* — the guru engages you in the service of Krishna. That is the guru's business. If an aspirant devotee comes to the guru, he will engage him in the loving service of Krishna. But why can't you satisfy Krishna? What is wrong? Where is the mistake? Does anyone know?

Devotee: Because we have some material desires?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. In his purport to the verse we are studying today, (*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.24), my revered spiritual master says:

If, however, anyone has any material desire to be fulfilled, he had better pray for it to the Supreme Lord (although that is not pure devotion), and he will thus achieve the desired result.

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāma vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10) says that whatever desire one may have, whether they have many material desires, *sarva-kāma*, they are desirous of liberation, *mokṣa-kāma*, or they may have no desires, *akāma*, let one pray to the Supreme Lord Krishna, and when he sanctions it, then one's desire will be fulfilled.

Take the example of Dhruva Maharaja; he had the material desire to sit on the throne of his father. He went to the forest and underwent severe austerities under the guidance of his spiritual master, Narada Muni. Within a short six months, Dhruva satisfied the Supreme Lord Vishnu. Then Lord Vishnu came and asked Dhruva, "Ask for any boon." However, by getting Lord Vishnu, all Dhruva's material desires had disappeared. Dhruva then replied, "I have nothing to ask from you."

In the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* (7.28), Dhruva Maharaja states:

*sthānābhilāṣī tapasi sthito 'haṁ
tvām prāptavān deva-munīndra-guhyam
kācam vicinvān api divya-ratnam
svāmin kṛtārtho 'smi varam na yāce*

"I had a desire for position, so I underwent *tapasya*, penance. I was just searching for some pieces of glass, but I found *divya-ratna*, an invaluable jewel. *kṛtārtho 'smi varam na yāce* — I am fully satisfied. I have no boon to ask for."

This is most important. At first, Dhruva had a material desire. Therefore he underwent *tapasya*. But then he became so satisfied that he didn't ask for anything. Still, Lord Vishnu said, "No, no. You go and sit on the throne of your father." That was his first desire. Vishnu told him, "Sit there for 36,000 years and rule." Not one or two years, but 36,000 years. He received such a great boon without even asking. All his desires were fulfilled. Lord Vishnu created a planet for him, the Dhruva planet, which will never be annihilated even during the complete annihilation. It is an

eternal planet. Therefore it is said that if anyone has any material desires they should pray to the Supreme Lord. Krishna or Vishnu gives us boons in such a way that we will never ask again for anything material.

A very nice description is given in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *madhya* 22.38:

*kṛṣṇa kahe, — 'āmā bhaje, māge viṣaya-sukha
amṛta chādī' viṣa māge, — ei baḍa mūrkhā*

Krishna says, "He is worshipping me, and in return asking for material enjoyment. He is such a foolish *mūrkhā*. *sva-caraṇāmṛta diyā 'viṣaya' bhulāiba* — He is such a rascal that he is not asking for my lotus feet (*Cc. madhya* 22.39). He is asking for sense gratification. But I am a wise man. *ei mūrkhē 'viṣaya' kene diba* — Why will I give such a fool material enjoyment? I will give him my lotus feet and make him forget his desire to enjoy." Krishna, Vishnu, does like this. All desires will be fulfilled, and at last you will get the lotus feet of Vishnu, Krishna.

Better to worship Vishnu, Krishna, and satisfy him. Then you can satisfy one and all. But how can you do that? There is a very easy way. Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur describes it in his *Guro-aṣṭaka*, text eight: *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi* — If you can satisfy and get the mercy of your spiritual master, the bona fide representative and intimate associate of Krishna, then automatically you can satisfy and get the mercy of Krishna. Otherwise, whatever you may do, it is not possible. Therefore, although we try, still we cannot satisfy Lord Krishna, or Vishnu, because we don't satisfy our guru. ❧

— Excerpted from a lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā*. New Vrindavan, West Virginia. 3 October 1990.

RAMACHANDRA MEETS SRINIVAS

*Adapted from Yadunandana Das'
Karnānanda, chapters one and three*

One day, Srinivas Acharya Prabhu was sitting on the bank of a pond to the west of his house when he saw a marriage party passing nearby. The bridegroom, who was being carried on a palanquin, was extremely attractive. His skin was the color of a golden *ketaki* flower. His arms were long, with shoulders like that of a lion. His navel deep, his feet and palms reddish, and he had silky

curling hair. He had a sharp, high nose and beautifully set teeth, and his lips were reddish like the *bimba* fruit. His face was effulgent like the full moon, his eyes like lotus petals, and his neck was like a conch shell. He had a slender waist, and well-shaped thighs. He wore silken cloth, had a garland of flowers, and his body was adorned with sandalwood paste.

Srinivas thought to himself, “Is he the son of a Gandharva? Or Kamadev himself? Such a beautiful person should certainly utilize his life in the service of Krishna. Otherwise what is the use of such extraordinary beauty?”

Srinivas inquired about the bridegroom from some members of the marriage party, and was informed that the young man was Sri Ramachandra Kaviraj, a great scholar with qualities equal to those of Brihaspati or Sarasvati. He belonged to a high-class family, was a famous physician, and was formerly a resident of Kumaranagar. After obtaining this information, Srinivas returned to his house, and Ramachandra, who had overheard Srinivas’ enquiries, returned to his place.

Ramachandra spent the night in a brahmin’s house, thinking deeply about Srinivas Prabhu. In the morning, he came running to Srinivas and fell at his feet, crying loudly. Overwhelmed with emotion, he begged the blessings of Prabhu. Srinivas lovingly lifted him from the ground and embraced him warmly. Sri Acharya emotionally declared that they had a long, deep-rooted relationship, and were meeting again after a long separation. Srinivas then chanted *kṛṣṇa-nāma* in his ear and sang *rādhā-kṛṣṇa-līlā* to him. He also assisted Ramachandra in the study of *vaiṣṇava* literatures, and blessed him to become an earnest lover and devotee of Krishna. Srinivas told Ramachandra about the glories of Narottam Thakur, and instructed him to go and meet him in Vrindavan. In due course of time, Narottam and Ramachandra became such good friends that people considered them to be like one soul.

One day, as Srinivas was entering into the compound of his house with Ramachandra, they saw what appeared to be a snake. Srinivas jumped across it in fear. Ramachandra Kaviraj searched for the snake but was unable to find it. Rather, he

discovered that Prabhu had mistaken a coil of straw to be a snake. Nevertheless, he did not contradict his master. When Srinivas himself discovered that it was a coil of straw and pointed it out, Ramachandra at once accepted his opinion. Later, when the wives of Srinivas were resting, Sri Acharya came to them and began to explain to them the exalted characteristics of Ramachandra. He compared Ramachandra to Arjuna by citing a story from the Mahabharata.

Once upon a time, Dronacharya was teaching the art of using weapons to Duryodhan and his hundred brothers, along with Yudhisthir and the other four Pandavas. Dronacharya put a target bird on the highest branch of a tree and ordered them all to aim at the eye of the bird with an arrow. Duryodhan and his brothers took up their weapons and happily aimed at the mark. Drona then asked them what they were seeing at that moment, and they replied that they saw the tree, its branches, and the bird. The *ācārya*, angry and dissatisfied with their answer, rebuked them saying that they would never be able to learn the art of using weapons. Next, he called Arjuna to aim at the bird and asked him the same question. Arjuna replied that he saw nothing other than the eye of the bird. Dronacharya ordered him to shoot, and Arjuna’s arrow perfectly hit the eye of the bird. Greatly satisfied, the guru explained to all that Arjuna never diverted his attention from the eye of the bird. That is why he passed the test. Arjuna bowed to the feet of his master and took his seat among the other disciples. With content, Drona told Arjuna that he would be the only person who would be able to compare to his master, and that he was his best disciple.

Srinivas took great pleasure in describing this incident and comparing Kaviraj to Arjuna. Ramachandra never disobeyed his master. He always sincerely listened to Prabhu, even when the latter ordered him to take his food after everyone else. Srinivas further described Ramachandra’s faithfulness by citing the time when he himself had mistaken a coil of straw to be a snake, and although Ramachandra knew this, he nevertheless tried to find the snake in the courtyard as ordered by Srinivas.

Yet, when Prabhu told him that it was a coil of straw, not a snake, Ramachandra at once accepted his master's opinion. Ramachandra humbly submitted himself to Srinivas, saying that without the favor of his master, how could he know what was right or wrong? Thus Srinivas openly declared that just as Arjuna was the dearest disciple of Dronacharya, so Ramachandra was most dear to him. "From now on," Srinivas said, "everyone should take it for granted that Ramachandra's opinion is the same as mine." Srinivas explained that Ramachandra and Narottam were like his two eyes. Srinivas said, "He who receives the favor of Ramachandra also attains the blessings of Lord Krishna." In this way Sri Acharya took great pleasure in glorifying Ramachandra. ❀

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A PLEA FOR MERCY

By the poet Prema Das

The scholar Sukumar Sen in A History of Brajabuli Literature writes that Prema Das,

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir

National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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श्री कृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

or Premananda Das, lived in the early 1700s and was a disciple of Hari Goswami, a devotee in the line of Lord Nityananda Prabhu's wife, Jahnava Devi. Amongst other writings, Prema Das was the author of Vamśī-śikṣā, a poem dealing with the life and teachings of Mahaprabhu's associate Vamsi Vadananda. He also wrote Caitanya-candrodaya-kaumudī, a Bengali metrical version of the Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭakam of Srila Kavi Karnapur.

(Kāmoda-rāga)

bhakta-gaṇa-śrī-carāṇe mora ei nivedane

sabe āśirovāda kara more

caitanya baliba mukhe caitanya baliba sukhe

tāre bhajī janma-janmāntare

I place a request before the glorious feet of the devotees. O devotees, please bless me. Please bless me that my mouth will chant the name Chaitanya, that I will always be delighted to chant the name Chaitanya, and that I will worship Lord Chaitanya birth after birth.

śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma viśaya āśraya sadma

tāhā gati jīvana-maraṇe

prabhu chila rāmacandra jāhnavā-caraṇa-dvandva

sva-gaṇa caitanya yāra mane

Bless me that I will take shelter of my spiritual master's lotus feet, and that his feet will be my goal in life and death. Bless me that Ramachandra Das will be my master, Ramachandra who took shelter of Jahnava's feet. Bless me that I will consider association with his disciples to be my very life.

kāla-sarpa-bhayaṅkara premānanda-hīna nara

anātha dākiche gaura-hari

prema-dāsa ageyāne premāmṛta dei dāne

kṛpā-kara ātma-sātha kari

A certain person, terrified of the snake of time, a person who does not know spiritual bliss and spiritual love, a person without a master or a shelter, calls out "Gaura-Hari!" O Lord, please be merciful to that person, the fool Prema Das. Please give him the nectar of ecstatic spiritual love. Please accept him as one of your associates. ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 170 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

3 February 2008 Śrī Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī, 12 Mādhava, 521 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,035

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- **HIGH CLASS NOT MASS**

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

- **TOLERANCE**

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur

- **GANGADEVI'S LOVE FOR GAURANGA**

Srila Lochan Das Thakur

- **DRINK THE SWEET NECTAR OF THE KING OF MANTRAS**

The poet Jagadananda

HIGH CLASS NOT MASS

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



I like this idea of distributing books and preaching. That is Lord Chaitanya's plan, and because you are doing it so nicely you are already making the greatest contribution. So what need there is for some special instruction from me? But if you want, I must give, because you are serving Krishna so nicely. So in that case my request to you is that you enter into the universities and colleges wherever possible and preach there with a view to recruiting some first-class devotees for helping me manage and push on this movement all over the world. Overall, there is a shortage of first-class, experienced men to manage things to the highest standard, as you are doing. Therefore I am calling upon you, the big leaders, to push this idea forward, namely, to attract some educated men to join us. The idea is that they will only agree to join us if we conduct ourselves intelligently by our preaching approach. The secret will be to engage them as they like to be engaged. Suppose I have some education, I am business student, or I have some skill or talent, I am typist, a musician, or something like that. I will like to utilize these things for Krishna, only if I am encouraged in a certain way, very

tactfully. I must not be discouraged at first by too much forcing me to accept everything such as shaving the head, rising very early, going for street *saṅkīrtana*, etc. No, let me come gradually. Let me study Krishna Consciousness and see how it is practical and sublime. Gradually I may get some taste for these other things and agree to do them voluntarily and intelligently. We are not dogmatic or like an army-camp. We are servants of Krishna. We understand that Krishna is our protector under all circumstances. We have no anxieties, so we are very liberal and tolerant of others. Seeing their sinful activities, we consider them innocent victims of *māyā*, and we try to help them understand the real position of life. You know this art, how to attract and engage men, so aim for the top-class of men and give them every opportunity and facility to become convinced of our philosophy and engage themselves to their satisfaction. That will be the best contribution. Spread this idea also to the other leaders. So now I do not think there will be any difficulty for you to fill your Seattle centre with the best devotees in our movement. And then I shall be very glad to come there at the next opportunity to give them personal instructions. Appeal to the high class of men, not the mass. The mass also — we do not eliminate anyone — but if the best men are there to run things, the masses will follow later. ❀

— Letter to Sukadev. 13 December 1972.

next column ❀



TOLERANCE

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Bhaktivinoda-vāṇī-vaibhava is a collection of the teachings of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode compiled by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode, a prominent disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, and published in 1938. The book is in the form of a series of questions composed by the compiler, with answers extracted from Thakur Bhaktivinode's teachings. The following are some extracts from chapter 91:

What is the duty of a tolerant person?

If anyone blasphemes you, you should tolerate it. Do not insult anyone. You should not take shelter of the material body and envy others. There is no doubt that lust is a place where Kali can reside. Becoming lusty to serve Krishna is transcendental and is also known as love of God. To desire sense gratification is mundane and is Kali's residence. One must give up such mundane desires. (*Sajjana Toṣaṇī* 15.2)

Is it part of one's occupational duty to display intolerance toward other processes?

Those who blaspheme, hate, or envy other processes are certainly ignorant and foolish. They are not as concerned about their own goal of life as they are about indulging in useless argument. (*Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* 1.1)

Can devotees who maintain material desires be tolerant?

Those whose devotional service is motivated cannot conquer anger. It is not possible to conquer anger only by one's intelligence. In a short time, attachment for sense enjoyment will overcome the intelligence and give anger a place in the intelligence's kingdom. (*Sajjana Toṣaṇī* 11.5)

How should a devotee who chants the holy names practice tolerance?

One should be more tolerant than a tree. One should also give up envy and maintain proper respect for everyone. (*Sikṣāṣṭaka* 3)

What kind of compassion is indicated by the phrase taror api sahiṣṇunā — "More tolerant than a tree?"

The phrase "more tolerant than a tree" indicates that although a tree is cut, it does not protest. Rather, it helps others by its

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shade, fruits, and flowers. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa's devotees should show greater compassion than a tree by helping everyone whether friends or enemies. Such compassion is the ornament of the non-envious devotees who chant the holy names. (*Sikṣāṣṭaka* 3)

Can one who is impatient engage in the worship of Hari?

For the practitioner of devotional service, *dhairya*, patience, is extremely necessary. Those who possess *dhairya* are called *dhīra*, sober. When men lack this quality, they become restless. Those who are impatient cannot work. By *dhairya*, a practitioner controls first himself and then the whole world. (*Sajjana Toṣaṇī* 11.5) ॐ

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GANGADEVI'S LOVE FOR GAURANGA

Adapted from Srila Lochan Das Thakur's

Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala, Ādi Līlā Chapter Five

During one enchanting evening, Vishwambhar and his friends went to have *darśana* of the Ganga. On both banks of the river, many brahmins and saintly devotees offered respects and prayers to Gangadevi. Village ladies came carrying waterpots on their hips. Many saintly and pious men as well as crowds of different panditas with names like Mishra, Acharya, and Bhatta, and saintly pious men, came and gazed at the pure and beautiful river. Both young and old were worshiping the Ganga with flowers, fragrances, sandalwood paste, garlands, and splendid bananas.

Overcome with love for Lord Gaura, Gangadevi could not restrain herself, and her waters rushed and spilled over her banks in order to gently touch the body of Lord Gauranga.

People wondered, "Why does the Ganga seem more beautiful today? Although she is usually calm and quiet, today she is loudly roaring and her current is swiftly surging. There are no rainclouds, yet she is flooding over her banks."

Amongst them was a brahmin who was a great devotee of the goddess Ganga. By Gangadevi's mercy, this pure-hearted brahmin knew everything about the past, present, and future. Seeing the Ganga swirling in ecstasy, this brahmin became joyful. He started meditating on the meaning of what was happening before his eyes. Suddenly he saw Lord Vishwambhar and his friends approaching the Ganga. With great love, the Lord gazed at the Ganga. The hairs of his body stood erect, his body expanded in size, and his reddish eyes filled with tears of compassion. The brahmin understood, "He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Approaching the Lord, the brahmin fell down like a stick to offer obeisances. He saw that the Lord was overcome with love for the Goddess Ganga. Again and again the Lord remembered the Ganga in his heart. When the Lord approached her, the Ganga touched the Lord's hands. Although she touched the Lord's hands, Gangadevi still didn't feel completely satisfied, so she splashed her waves across the lotus feet of the Lord. Filled with ecstasy, Lord Gauraranga shouted, "Haribol!"

*prabhu anurāge gaṅgā hiyāmājhe rahe
śata dhārā jala āṅkhi-sāgarete bahe*

*lome lome bahe nīra — loka bole gharma
uthalila premasindhu — drava-maya brahma*

Filled with love, Goddess Gaṅga embraced Lord Gaura to her chest. The tears from her eyes flowed towards the ocean in a hundred currents. Her pure waters flow from each hair on Gauranga's body. Although the people call it perspiration, it is the rising ocean of ecstatic love, the pure spiritual nature in liquid form. (Texts 25-26)

In all directions, everyone ecstatically chanted, "Hari! Haribol!" With blissful waves, the Ganga became a rising ocean of ecstatic love. The people of Nadiya were all filled with wonder. Only the brahmin devotee of the Ganga understood what was happening. That brahmin saw Vishwambhar as the Supreme Personality of Godhead with the Ganga overflowing as she gazed at him with ecstatic love. Falling at Lord Vishwambhar's feet, in a voice choked with emotion, the Brahmin said, "On this day, goddess Ganga

has truly given her mercy to me. With my own eyes I now see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whom even the kings of the yogis and the kings of the sages cannot see in their trance of meditation." He rolled on the ground and loudly wept. Overcome with the ecstasy of love, that brahmin forgot himself.

Casting a glance at the brahmin overcome with ecstatic love, Lord Gaura, his heart filled with joy, returned to his home. Everyone please hear what the brahmin then spoke, his words describing the goddess Ganga's birth. He said, "I will tell you why Gangadevi has now risen so high. One day, Lord Shiva was filled with bliss while chanting Krishna's glories. Narada Muni came and began playing on his *vīṇa* and singing with him. Then Ganesh arrived and began playing on a *mṛdaṅga* drum. In ecstasy their bodies erupted in goose bumps from head to toe. The sounds of their *kīrtana* pierced the coverings of the material universe.

"Overcome with ecstasy, Krishna came there. He told the three of them, 'Please don't sing like this. Shiva, please listen. You don't know what happens when you sing like this. When you sing like this my body cannot remain stable. My body will melt.'

"Hearing Krishna's words, Mahadeva laughed and said, 'I will see if that is the truth.' Then Mahesh began to sing with even more fervor. His singing gradually filled the whole material universe. Suddenly, Krishna's body began to melt. Frightened, Shiva stopped singing and the Lord stopped melting. The part of Krishna that melted became famous in the worlds as *kāruṇya-jala*, the water of Lord Krishna's mercy.

*sei drava-brahma-nāma karuṇāra jala
tīrtharūpī janārdana goṣaye sakala*

"The part of Krishna that melted became known as *drava-brahma*, liquid spirit. It was full of compassion, the embodiment of Lord Janardan, and a great place of pilgrimage. (Text 48)

"That water is very, very rare in this world. Lord Brahma carefully kept it in his *kamaṇḍalu*, waterpot.

To favor his dear devotee Bali Maharaja, Krishna later manifested himself in his dwarf form of Vamanadev. The Lord begged

three steps of land from Bali Maharaja. With his first step, Lord Vamanadev covered the earth planet, his second step covered the universe and he put his final step on Bali's head. No one else is as merciful as Krishna. His mercy blessed everyone in the three worlds. The water flowing from his toenails filled the material universe. With great love, Lord Brahma worshiped that water. The people of this world therefore call the Ganga *tripāda-sambhavā* — the water born from Krishna's third step.

The brahmin continued, "With your own eyes, everyone please gaze at Lord Vishwambhar Mahaprabhu, who is the Supreme Lord himself."

The brahmin explained, "When Gangadevi saw Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu she remembered these pastimes, and in ecstatic love she overflowed her banks. Lord Vishwambhar lovingly gazed at the Ganga's waters. Then, on the pretext of making great waves, Gangadevi tenderly caressed Vishwambhar's lotus feet. Goddess Ganga explained all this to me." ❀

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

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DRINK THE SWEET NECTAR OF THE KING OF MANTRAS

The poet Jagadananda

(*Aśābarī-rāga*)

*nara! hari-nāma antare achu bhāvaha
habe bhava-sāgare pāra
dhara re śravaṇe nara hari-nāma sādare
cintāmaṇi uha sāra*

O people! When in your heart you love Krishna's holy names, then you will cross to the farther shore of the ocean of birth and death. O people, with your ears please grasp Krishna's holy names! With love and respect hold the *cintāmaṇi* jewel of Krishna's holy names.

*yadi kṛta-pāpī ādare kabhu mantraka-
rāja śravaṇe kare pāna
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-bale haya tachu durgama
āpa-tāpa saha trāṇa*

If you have committed sins, then with your ears drink the sweet nectar of the king of mantras! Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya will save you from all sins and sufferings.

*karaha gaura-guru- vaiṣṇava āśraya
laha nara! hari-nāma hāra
saṁsāre nāma la-i sukr̥tī ha-iyā tare
ā-pāmara durācāra*

Take shelter of Lord Gaura, guru, and the *vaiṣṇavas*! Wear the necklace of Krishna's holy names. Even the most misbehaved and unimportant person in this world will become a saint by chanting Krishna's holy names.

*ithe kṛta viṣaya tṛṣṇā pahuñ nāma-hāra
yo dhāraṇe śrama bhāra
kutṛṣṇa-jagadā- nanda kṛta-kalmaṣa
kumati rahala kārāgāra*

One should thirst after Krishna's holy names. One should wear a necklace of Krishna's holy names. With great diligence one should meditate on Krishna's holy names. These words were spoken by Jagadananda, a person who thirsts after the wrong things, a sinner with a wicked heart, and a criminal who resides in a prison. ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 171 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

17 February 2008 Śrī Bhaimī Ekādaśī, 26 Mādhava, 521 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,042

Highlights

• AVOID NON-DEVOTEES

From Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode's Harināma-cintāmaṇī

• COOPERATING WITH THE SERVANTS OF GOD

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• VISHWARUP BECOMES NITAI

From Srila Nityananda Das' Prema Vilāsa

• YADUNANDAN DAS AND THE BOOK KARNANANDA

• THE PRINCE OF GALLANT LOVERS

A poem by Yadunandan Das

AVOID NON-DEVOTEES

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode
Harināma-cintāmaṇī 4.75-77

*kṛṣṇete abhakta — asat dvitīya prakāra
māyāvādī dharma-dhvajī nirīśvara āra*

The second type of bad association is to mix with those who are not devotees of Krishna. There are three kinds of non-devotees: *māyāvādīs* (impersonalists), *dharma-dhvajīs* (pretenders), and *nirīśvaras* (atheists).



Author's commentary

"Māyāvādī" refers to persons who believe that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not eternal, that the form of Krishna and other forms of the Lord are made of *māyā*, and that the individuality of the *jīva* souls is also an illusion. The *dharma-dhvajīs*, hypocrites who wrap themselves in the flag of religion, are persons who have neither devotion nor renunciation in their hearts and are simply cheaters wearing the garments a saintly person would wear and putting on a show of performing spiritual activities. A *nirīśvara* is an atheist, one who does not believe in the existence of a supreme controller.

*varjile e saba saṅga sādhu-nindā naya
ihāke ye nindā bale sei varjya haya*

One should avoid the association of persons who criticize saintly devotees.

*ei saba saṅga chāḍi ananya-śaraṇa
kṛṣṇa-nāma kari pāya kṛṣṇa-prema-dhana*

Anyone who avoids these persons, chants Krishna's holy name, and takes shelter of Krishna and no one else, attains the treasure of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. ❧

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COOPERATING WITH THE SERVANTS OF GOD

His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



The servants of God come to propagate God consciousness, and intelligent people should cooperate with them in every respect. By serving the servant of God, one can please God more than by directly serving the Lord. The Lord is more pleased when

he sees that his servants are properly respected because such servants risk everything for the service of the Lord and so are very dear to the Lord. The Lord declares in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.69) that no one is dearer to him than one who risks everything to preach his glory. By serving the servants of the Lord, one gradually gets the quality of such servants, and thus one becomes qualified to hear the glories of God. The eagerness to hear about God is the first qualification of a devotee eligible for entering the kingdom of God. ॐ

— Purport to *Bhāg.* 1.2.16

VISHWARUP BECOMES NITAI

*Adapted from Srila Nityananda Das’
Prema-vilāsa 7.18-49*

Sachi Thakurani was the wife of Jagannatha Mishra. Sachi and her husband were very proud of their attractive elder son, Vishwarup, who was a great scholar. Sachi’s father lived at Belpukur Belpukhuria. His elder son was Yogeswar Pandit, his next son was Ratnagarbha Pandit, and then his daughter Sachi Devi. The son of Yogeswar Pandit was Lokanath Pandit, who possessed all good qualities. He was Vishwarup’s schoolmate and constant companion. After some time, Vishwarup also became great friends with Adwaita Acharya. They used to spend their time together discussing various scriptures. Within a short while, both Vishwarup and Lokanath became accomplished scholars. However, Vishwarup had no interest in material life, and very soon he decided to renounce the world and become an ascetic. Despite the pleading of his bereaved parents, Vishwarup gave up his *śikhā* and *brāhmaṇa* thread and accepted the *daṇḍa*, *kaupīna*, and the saffron colored dress of a *sannyāsī* and was renamed Shankaranya Puri. Pandita Lokanatha became his disciple and accompanied Vishwarup as his assistant in their travels to various *tirthas*.

*dui vatsara ante tānra siddhi prapti haila
yoga-māyā svarūpiṇī tāha ye kahila*

*rāḍhadeśe ekacākā bali eka grāma
tāhāte āchaye vipra ati guṇavān*

After two years, Vishwarup left this world, and it is said that by the action of *yoga-māyā* he was reborn in Ekachakra Gram in Radhadesh to a highly qualified *brāhmaṇa*. (Text 30-31)

*hādāi paṇḍita tānra patnī padmāvati
tānhāra udare janma ha-ila saṁprati*

He appeared from the womb of Hadai Pandit’s wife, Padmavati. (Text 32)

*rāmanavamīra dine garbhera sañcāra
mātā-pitāra citte sukha bādila apāra*

From the day of *Rāma-navamī* when he was conceived, the happiness of his parents increased. (Text 33)

*dine dine garbha bādī daśamāsa haila
brāhmaṇa brāhmaṇī mane ānanda bādila*

He stayed in the womb for ten months while that *brāhmaṇa* and *brāhmaṇī* felt great ecstatic bliss. (Text 34)

*māghamāsa śuklapakṣa trayodaśī-dine
sarva-sulakṣaṇe janmilena sei kṣaṇe*

*nāma dilena nityānanda ānanda sakala
kṣaṇe stabdha hañā thāke hāse khala khala*

On the thirteenth day of the waxing moon in the month of *Māgha*, the child took birth at a time when everything was very auspicious. When he was given the name Nityananda, everyone became joyful. At first they were speechless, and then they laughed loudly. (Texts 35-36)

*sankarṣaṇa balarāma eka-i svarūpa
viśvarūpa śankarāraṇya kalpa bheda-rūpa*

Nityananda Prabhu and Vishwarup (Shankararanya) were the same personality; both were manifestations of Sankarsana-Balarama. (Text 49) ॐ

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YADUNANDAN DAS AND THE BOOK KARNANANDA

*The scholar Sukumar Sen, writes about
Yadunandan Das in A History of Brajabuli
Literature:*

*Yadunandan was born in a Vaiśya family at the
village Malihati, near Katwa. He was a disciple of
Srinivasa Acharya and later become an attendant
of the ācārya’s daughter, Hemlata Devi, who lived
at Budhai Para. [The Gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava-*

abhidhāna says that Yadunandan Das was the nephew of Hemlata and the disciple of Subal Chandra.] The poet has given his account [of some of the activities of his life], though very briefly, in his *Karṇānanda*, a historical work dealing with the activities of Srinivas Acharya that was completed in 1607 A.D.

Yadunandan was a prolific writer. Besides his lyric poems and the *Karṇānanda*, he had translated in Bengali verse, under the title *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-līlā-rasa-kadamba* the Sanskrit drama *Vidagdha-mādhava* of Rupa Goswami. He had similarly treated the Sanskrit epic poem *Govinda-līlāmṛta* of Krishnadas Kaviraj, and also the *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* along with the *Sāraṅga-raṅgadā*, the commentary thereon by Krishnadas Kaviraj. Some of the lyric poems of Yadunandan found in the anthologies are taken from his translations of the *Vidagdha-mādhava* and the *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*.

Yadunandan was certainly the last of the great poets of Brajabuli [language] and has not been surpassed by any. The diction of his Bengali verses is smooth and dignified.

Another secular scholar, Melville T. Kennedy, describes Yadunandan and *Karṇānanda* in his book *The Chaitanya Movement*:

The Karṇānanda, by Yadunandan Das, belongs to the same period, and was written at much the same time as the *Prema-vilāsa* ... It deals with the same events and figures treated by the *Prema-vilāsa*, but its viewpoint is somewhat different and its command of style and poetic phrase is much superior. Its interest in theology gives it importance as throwing light on the development of doctrine in the [Gaudiya Vaishnava] sect. The *parakiya* teaching, for instance, which had so much influence in the sect, receives much consideration in this work; and we learn from it that Srinivas himself was an upholder of this doctrine.

Yadunandan was something of a Sanskrit scholar, and he is perhaps equally well known among vaiṣṇavas for his translations of works of the Vrindavan saints. He also contributed many songs to the *pada* collections.

Yadunandan Das speaks something about himself and how he came to write *Karṇānanda* in the seventh *vilāsa* of that work:

*bindha-i pādāte rahi śrīmatī nikaṭe
sadaī ānande bhāsi jāhnavīra taṭe*

I stay close to Srimati Hemlata Devi in Badhuipada and I am always filled with joy, residing on the banks of the Ganga. (Text 194)

*pañca-daśa śata āra vatsara unatṛiṣe
vaiṣākha māsete āra pūrṇimā dibase
nija prabhura pāda-padma mastake kariyā
sampūrṇa karila grantha śuna mana diyā*

In the year 1529, on the *Vaiṣākha Pūrṇimā* day, putting my Lord's lotus feet on my head, I completed this book. Please listen to it with attention. (Texts 195-196)

*śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya prabhura dāsera anudāsa
tāra dāsera dāsa ei yadunandana dāsa
grantha śuni ṭhākurañīra manera ānanda
śrī mūkhe rākhilā nāma grantha karṇānanda*

This servant of the servant of the follower of a servant of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu named Yadunandan Das wrote this book. Hearing it, Thakurani was so pleased that she named it "*karṇānanda*", nectar for the ears, with her own lotus mouth. (Texts 197-198)

*śrīmatī sagaṇe grantha kari āsvādāna
pulake pūrīta deha sāsru nayana*

Having relished the book, Srimati and her associates became overwhelmed with ecstasy and began to shed tears of joy. (Text 199)

*punaśca śrīmatī kahena mastake pada diyā
kahite lāgilā kichu hānsiyā hānsiyā*

Srimati put her feet on my head and began to say something, smiling again and again. (Text 200)

*mora karṇa tṛpta kailā grantha śunāiyā
śravaṇa paraśe mora juḍāila hiyā*

She said, "By hearing your book my ears are satisfied. It has brought pleasure to my heart." (Text 201)

*śuna śuna ohe putra kahiye tomār
baḍa-i ānanda mora tāhā śunibāre*

"Listen, listen, my son, let me tell you something. Hearing your book has brought me great happiness." (Text 202)

*śrīmatīra ājñā mui laiṇā mastake
paramānande karṇānanda likhila pustake*

Taking the order of Srimati Hemlata Thakurani on my head, with great ecstasy I wrote this book *Karṇānanda*. (Text 248)

*karṇānanda kathā ei sudhāra niryāsa
śravaṇe paraśe bhaktera janme premollāsa*

The topics of *Karṇānanda* are the essence of nectar. Hearing them, feelings of ecstatic love awaken in the devotees. (Text 249)

śrī ācārya prabhura kanyā śrīla hemalatā
prema-kalpa-vallī kibā nīramila dhātā

Srinivas Acharya Prabhu's daughter is Srila Hemlata. What a creeper of ecstatic love has the creator created! (Text 250)

se dui caraṇa padma hṛdaye vilāse
karṇānanda kathā kahe yadunandana dāse

Considering her two lotus feet to be the pleasure of my heart, Yadunandan Das writes the book *Karṇānanda*. (Text 251) [For more about Yadunandan Das see KK Bindu number 10]

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THE PRINCE OF GALLANT LOVERS

Sri Yadunandan Das

In *A History of Brajabuli Literature*, Sukumar Sen says that the following poem “must be counted among the very best poems in Brajabuli literature”:

so vara nāgara-rāja
tapana-tanayā taṭe nīpa-taru nikaṭe
hīlana naṭavara sāja

That prince of gallant lovers, dressed as a great dancer, is standing at ease under a *nīpa* tree by the bank of the daughter of the sun (the Yamuna).

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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marakata-ratana mukura jini lāvaṇi
prati-tanu piriti-pasāra
śārada cāṇḍa phāṇḍa mukha-maṇḍala
kuṇḍala śravane vithāra

The loveliness of his complexion surpasses that of a mirror made of pure emeralds. Every item of his person is a riot of love. The oval of his face is as beautiful as the orb of the moon. Earrings decorate his ears.

nācata bhāṇa madana-dhanu bhaṅgima
diṭhi-khañjana naṭa-joḍa
bāndhuli-adhare muralī-rava mādhuri
umatāyala mana mora

Under the arches of his eyebrows, which are the veritable bows of the god of love, dance his eyes like a pair of moving *khañjana* birds. The sweetness of the notes of the flute, placed at those lips resembling buds of *bāndhulī* flowers, has intoxicated my heart.

uḍata cūḍe cāru śikhi-candraka
manda-pavana sañe mela
kahe yadunandana śruti āṅkhi-rasāyana
tanu maṇa saba hari nela

On the crest of his head shivers a lovely peacock feather, agitated by a slight breeze. Yadunandan says in a way that is ambrosial to the ear, “He has stolen everything, both body and soul.”

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FOR THE PLEASURE OF THE SAINTS

Murari Gupta's

Śrī Caitanya-carita 1.1.15

vadāmi kāñcid bhagavat-kathām satām
haryāya kiñcit skhalanam yadā bhavet
tadātra saṁśodhayitum mahattamāḥ
pramāṇam evātra paropakāriṇaḥ

For the pleasure of the saints, I shall speak some narrations of the Lord's pastimes. Therein some grammatical errors may occur. At such times may the great souls engaged in the ultimate welfare activity bless me and render my work pure, for it is on their authority that I write.

— Translated into English by Bhaktivedanta Bhagavata Svami. Gaura Vani Press. Distributed by Nectar Books, Union City, Georgia, USA. 1998.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 172 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

3 March 2008 Śrī Vijaya Ekādaśī, 11 Govinda, 521 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,047

Highlights

• PREACHING AND MANAGEMENT

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• GRHASTHA DHARMA AND THE STORY OF THE JACKAL

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

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Sri Sajjana Toshani

PREACHING AND MANAGEMENT

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



The first point of management is to see to it that each and every member in the temple is chanting sixteen rounds regularly and following the regulations. That is our spiritual strength. That must be executed. (Conversation with

the GBC in Los Angeles, 25 May 1972.)

Preaching is more important than managing. Because you are preaching nicely and distributing so much *prasādam*, the management will follow like a shadow, and Krishna will send you no end of help. (Letter to Satsvarupa, 21 November 1971.)

In our preaching work we deal with so much property and money, and so many books bought and sold, but because these dealings all pertain to the Krishna consciousness movement they should never be considered material. That one is absorbed in thoughts of such management does not mean that he is outside of Krishna consciousness. If one rigidly observes the regulative principle of chanting sixteen rounds of the *mahā-mantra* every day, his dealings with the material world for the sake of spreading the Krishna consciousness

movement are not different from the spiritual cultivation of Krishna consciousness. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 5.16.3.)

Just do all our routine work nicely. This routine program is the backbone of our movement, and we stand solid on such programs as chanting, speaking, *ārati*, reading the scriptures, and *prasādam*. These things are sufficient for us. Any sane man will be attracted to such a program. And if we perform everything nicely and always seize every opportunity to preach about Krishna, that is our formula for success. Of course, management must be there, but if the preaching work is strong, the management will automatically be strong. So in all cases, become a very good preacher, and this will please me very much.

As preachers, we do not require elaborate temples for our work. No, we are content to live under a tree. So long as the preaching work is going on, never mind that there is no temple. Of course, in your western countries people must have a comfortable place to sit down, otherwise they will not come to chant. So as soon as possible you may get a nice place and invite the general public by making it very attractive. (Letter to Lochanananda, 8 December 1971.)

Since you are now a leader, Krishna is forcing you to become a very responsible and

advanced devotee. This is Krishna's special favor upon you. So now you must make sure that all the boys and girls who come to the temple are given all facility to perfect their lives in Krishna consciousness; you must give them good advice and instruction. You must be the perfect example of a Krishna conscious devotee. How is that? Follow the regulative principles very diligently, maintain the highest level of standard in the routine work such as rising early, cleansing, chanting, temple worship, street *saṅkīrtana* etc., and always keep the devotees satisfied. If your preaching work is strong, the management will be automatically easy. And the preaching work is strong if our routine work is strong. Never neglect our regular program, and that will be your success. (Letter to Suchandra, 11 January 1972.)

If you get a place, simply hold our standard program of *kīrtana* with class morning and evening, inviting friends and other people that you meet. In this way develop things gradually. We are not in a hurry to get a big, big house and a comfortable position. Our first and foremost business is to spread Krishna consciousness. So utilize every opportunity that Krishna gives you for preaching his message; that is the real meaning of temple management. (Letter to Sama Das and Sammita Dasi, 4 January 1973.)

You can construct a nice temple there immediately, but you say there are no devotees, so how can the temple management be executed? This is the problem. So you are conversant in the local language. If by preaching you bring some sincere souls to join you then it will be successful. Just like in Europe and America, I went single-handedly, and by preaching work the boys responded and therefore we can see some light of success. (Letter to Gour Govinda, 6 September 1976.)

Our preaching means that people are useless and we have to train them in such a way that they may take to Krishna consciousness. That is our management. But if one is completely incorrigible, then he will be asked to leave. He must be trained by our example, by our teaching, by our word. He should be corrected. You cannot expect that everyone who has come here will be a sadhu. It is not that. We collect from ordinary men, but we have to make him

into a sadhu. That is preaching. (Room Conversation with *sannyāsīs* in Vrindavan. 15 March 1974.) [article to be continued] ❀

GRHASTHA DHARMA AND THE STORY OF THE JACKAL

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Grhastha-āśrama means that there is some concession for material enjoyment, but it is restricted. As a *brahmacārī*, one is trained how to control his senses and mind. *Grhastha-āśrama* comes after such *brahmacārī* training. For twenty-five years, up to the fiftieth year, one remains in household life and gets some sexual enjoyment. He has this enjoyment, and that enjoyment — sons and daughters — there is so much burden on him that he can't sleep at night. He is simply crying, crying, crying. The wife's demands are there, the son's and daughter's demands are there. He feels like, "Oh, they are devouring me!" He is an old man now. "I earn this much money, but there are so many demands. What to do?" Now he has gained this experience. Therefore there is a saying, "One who has eaten a *dilīka laḍḍū*, he laments; and one who has not eaten, he also laments."

There is a story about a jackal that once saw a field of sugarcane. He entered into this field and had the desire to eat that sweet cane. There he saw something that was shaped like a honeycomb — a round shaped wasp's nest. He thought, "Oh, this is the fruit of sugarcane. A fruit like a big ball! Sugarcane is so sweet, thus the fruit must be much sweeter. So I must eat the fruit first." So he started to eat it. The wasps came out. Sting, sting... "WAAHAAOHHAHH!" "No more! No more eating from that ball-like fruit!" That is why it is said that in your youth you have the desire to eat this round, ball-shaped fruit, but when you gain enough experience about what that enjoyment is, when you have gotten stung, you understand: "OH, NO MORE! NO MORE! NO MORE!" At the fiftieth year, one who has been a *grhastha*, who has already eaten a *dilīka laḍḍū*, is crying. And one who has not eaten, he also laments, "Oh, I have not eaten it. How is it? Let me eat."

Therefore the guru says, "All right. Go, become a *grhastha*. Accept a wife. Gain some experience. Enjoy ... and get the reaction." Then, "No more." You will give it up.

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.18.43) Krishna tells Uddhava what the duty of a householder is:

*brahmacaryam tapaḥ śaucam santoṣo bhūta-sauhṛdam
gr̥hasthasyāpy ṛtau gantuḥ sarveṣāṁ mad-upāsanam*

Chastity, penance, purity, peacefulness and kindness to all living beings constitute *gr̥hastha-dharma*. A *gr̥hastha* approaches his wife for procreation at the proper time after her menstrual period. Only on those days sanctioned by scriptures is it considered chaste. That is a *gr̥hastha*. Worship of Hari should be practiced by everyone, whether one is a *brahmacārī*, *gr̥hastha*, *vānaprastha*, or *sannyāsī*.

Brahmacarya means “celibacy”. A *gr̥hastha* is also a *brahmacārī*. He is known as an *upakurvāṇa-brahmacārī*, one who takes the vow of celibacy up to a certain age. There are two types of *brahmacārīs*: *naiṣṭika-brahmacārī*, one who lives in lifelong celibacy, and *upakurvāṇa-brahmacārī*. A *naiṣṭika-brahmacārī* strictly follows the rules and regulations of the *brahmacārī āśrama* and becomes free from all material desires. He never discharges a drop of semen. *brāhmaṇo 'gnir iva jvalan* — A *brāhmaṇa* observing the great vow of celibacy becomes brilliant like fire. [*Bhāg.* 11.17.36] He is not allowed to accept marriage, but remains in the *guru-gr̥ha*, the house of the guru, till the end of life. He is the proper candidate for *sannyāsa*.

If the guru observes, “No, he has material desires, so he cannot remain a *brahmacārī* throughout life. He should go and marry.” He has already practiced *brahmacarya*, he has already been given training how to control his mind and senses during the *brahmacārī* period. Unless one becomes a *brahmacārī* in the *guru-gr̥ha*, he cannot become a proper *gr̥hastha*. He becomes a *gr̥ha-vrata*, a *gr̥hamedhī*, attached to home and hearth, wife, son and daughter and all kinds of enjoyments until the last breath of his life. He cannot give it up. Prahlād Maharaja says that he is *adānta-gobhiḥ* — “He has no control over his senses. *punaḥ punaś carvita-carvaṇānām* — He is chewing the chewed again and again.” [*Bhāg* 7.5.30]

Thus, *brahmacarya* comes first and foremost. The *upakurvāṇa-brahmacārī* is one type of *brahmacārī*. Therefore we have strict regulations. The purpose of marriage, of accepting a wife, is to produce a worthy son. Who is a worthy son?

Kṛṣṇa-bhakta-putra, a *vaiṣṇava* son. One who will become a devotee and thereby render service to the senses of Krishna.

Krishna says in the *Gītā* [7.11]:

dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmō 'smi bharatarābha

“I am sex life that is not contrary to religious principles.”

This verse says, “principles of religion”. This is part of *gr̥hastha-dharma*. This is a principle of religion: He must only go to his wife for procreation when the proper time is there, when she has finished her menstruation, and she is willing, desirous of having a child. Then the husband must go and give her a child. That is *dharma*, *gr̥hastha-dharma*. ❀

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar, 12 April 1995.

ASSOCIATED COUNTERPART

PART ONE

Sri Sajjana Toshani

Vol. XXV June 1927

Sri Sajjana Toshani did not cite an author's name for this article. Since Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur was the journal's editor in June of 1927, so we can assume it was written either directly by him or under his supervision.

The Sanskrit word “guru” ordinarily means “heavy”, as opposed to “laghu”, meaning “light”. In its technical and etymological sense, the meaning of the term is, “One who by his super-human (*atimartya*) personality, as well as by the light of the transcendent force of his devout character, dispels the dark ignorance of the human heart and instills himself into the lives of those who unconditionally and sincerely surrender themselves to his divine feet.” Such is the great personality, the highest ideal that bears the appellation of guru in the *śāstras*. Hence the *śruti* says:

*tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
samit-pāṇiḥ śrotṛyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

To know Godhead fully, one should completely and most humbly surrender himself to the holy feet of a guru who is versed in the *śrauta-śāstras* and is ever devoted to *brahman*. [*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12]

Some may question this, saying, “What can be more intolerable than to submit our conduct — nay, the whole course of our spiritual life — to another's control?” ❀

Verily, resignation, submission or complete obedience come into direct collision with the ordinary activities, based on empiricism, of our misdirected free will — activities that always lead us to the pursuit of the senses. It is easier to tolerate fasts and austerities or to part with any of the necessities of life than to submit one's will to that of another who is a devout follower of the transcendent truth (*adhokṣaja satya*). However, to sincerely surrender oneself to the highest ideal is the greatest of all sacrifices, and it is the only royal road to the goal of unbounded eternal bliss.

As students of the empirical school, we are also expected to think, “We may obey god, but why do we need to obey a guru?” In anticipation of such words coming from our lips as the outcome of unconscious apathy towards Godhead, God himself tells us in language that cannot be misunderstood [*Bhāg. 11.17.27*]:

*ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān navamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāśūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guru*

You should know that the *ācārya* is the associated counterpart of myself. He should never be disregarded in any way. The transcendent conduct of the *ācārya* should not be measured and found fault with by using the very limited



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

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National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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power of mundane knowledge. The *ācārya* is the embodiment of all godliness.

Guru or the spiritual guide is the God-sent superhuman personality to save us from the bondage of empiricism. We are not to look upon him or trust in him or his transcendent wisdom as if he were a mortal being. Thereby we would be totally led astray from the path of devotion (*bhakti*). The spiritual pastor to whom we submit is the ambassador of Vishnu to lead us into the eternal kingdom of Vaikuntha, i.e. the kingdom that is free from all form of want. Godhead helps us, speaks to us through his associated counterpart, our eternal spiritual master, the guru. We can never so surely discover God's will, God's voice, as through the channel of humble obedience and sincere surrender to our spiritual master, so emphatically taught and devoutly practiced by all true devotees of olden times. The spiritual guide or *ācārya* is our model — the highest ideal before us. Influenced by pride, vanity or self-sufficiency, we should not shrink from following in his footsteps. We should take a vow of sincere obedience to the divine words of our spiritual guide, remembering him to be the most beloved — the associated counterpart of Godhead — who condescends to come down from Vaikuntha to lead us to our original abode. Without such a spiritual guide or guru, a person is like a boat without a helmsman or a ship without a rudder or a compass, left to drift hither and thither with every wind that blows. Hence the *ācārya* says:

*yo guroścaraṇaṁ samavahāya bhagavad antara-
mukhī kartuṁ prayatante, te teṣu teṣu upāyeṣu
khidyante ato vyaṣana-śatān vitā bhavanti ata eva iha
saṁsāre tiṣṭhanty eva. akṛta-karṇa-dhārā jaladhau
yathā tadvat.* [Unknown source]

“Those who attempt to approach Godhead, ignoring the holy feet of the guru, are put into great difficulties by the means they adopt. Overtaken by hundreds of dissipations, they are forced to remain in the succession of birth and death. As a layman in a boat intending to cross the ocean without the assistance of a helmsman is sure to lose his life, similarly a man desiring to approach Godhead without the help of guru is sure to be lost.”

[article to be continued]



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 173 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

17 March 2008 Śrī Āmalakī-vrata Ekādaśī, 25 Govinda, 521 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,053

Highlights

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Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

• KIRTANA SHOULD NOT BE STOPPED

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• APPEARANCE OF THE SON OF MOTHER SACHI

Srila Lochan Das Thakur

• NABADWIP PASTIMES

Srila Narahari Chakravarti's Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara

ALWAYS GIVE UP BAD ASSOCIATION

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*



In this letter, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta responds to a question about association with members of the sakhi-bheki sect, a group that practices dressing as "sakhis", female companions of Srimati Radharani.

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

[All glories to Sri Sri Guru and Gaurāṅga]

śrī gaudīya maṭha, kalikātā, 7 May 1930

Sri Chaitanya Dev instructed householder devotee men and women to engage in the service of the Lord in their homes with body, mind and words. Giving up the service of Krishna, the *jīva* becomes conditioned and thus becomes entangled with things that are not related to Krishna.

Asking whether it is appropriate to accept remnants from a renunciate in the line of *sakhi-bheki* is like asking, "Who is the father of Sita?" after reading the seventh canto of the *Rāmāyaṇa* [where the appearance of Sita as the daughter of Janak Maharaj is described].

It is prohibited to even talk with or see *kālanemīs*, those who give wicked counsel,

dharmadhvajīs, those who pretend to be religious, or *kaupīnaparās*, false renunciates — what to speak of eating their remnants! Similarly, degradation is inevitable should one's remnants be given to them. Kali causes some *jīvas* to fall down into many degraded forms that appear to be *vaiṣṇavas*.

To reside in a holy place and follow religious principles with a desire to engage in irreligious activities in the future in the name of religion is not at all approved. That is why the Lord's associates like Srila Rupa and Sanatan withdrew their pastimes from this world and simply engaged in the service of the Supreme Lord. Otherwise, the so-called religious activities of the hypocrites will lead the conditioned souls further into conditioned life.

When there is a self-realized soul present, to neglect that association and instead associate with persons whose propensity for service to the Supreme Lord has not manifested maturely is never desirable, even though it may be very pleasing. Everything will reveal itself if you discuss the conversation and dealings in Jagannath Puri between Sri Chaitanya and the wife of Parameswar Modak. [See *Cc. antya* 12. 54-60].

Nityāśīrṇbādak [Your ever well-wisher],
Sri Siddhanta Saraswati

— Translated by Sri Madhavendu Das from *Prabhupādera Patraṅgali, prathama-khanda*. Sri Chaitanya Math. Mayapur. 1991. Bengali. Pages 73-74.

next column



KIRTANA SHOULD NOT BE STOPPED

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



You are finding some difficulty in keeping pace regularly with the routine work. My advice to you under the circumstances is that at least for one hour you must all go to have *sankīrtana* outside on the streets or in the park. That is your life and soul, your first business. The next business is completing 16 rounds every day. The next business is your editing, and if you find extra time, then you can attend the temple ceremonies. Otherwise you can stop these activities, but outdoor *kīrtana*, your editing work and the chanting of 16 rounds must be done. Outdoor *kīrtana* must be done, even at the cost of suspending all editorial work. That is your first and foremost business. Temple worship is not so important. If need be, the whole temple can be locked, but the outdoor *kīrtana* cannot be stopped. ❧

— Letter to Rayaram. 17 May 1969.

APPEARANCE OF THE SON OF MOTHER SACHI

Adapted from Srila Lochan Das Thakur's
Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala 2.1.1-44

jaya jaya gadādhara śrī gaurāṅga narahari
jaya jaya nityānanda sarva-śaktidhārī

Glory, glory to Gadadhara and Lord Gauranga-Narahari! Glory to the all-powerful Lord Nityananda! (Text 1)

jaya jaya advaita-ācārya maheśvara
jaya jaya gaurāṅgera bhakta mahāvara

Glory, glory to Advaita Acharya, who is Lord Shiva himself! Glory, glory to the great devotees of Lord Gauranga! (Text 2)

I place my head in the dust of all their feet. Now please listen attentively as I speak the *ādi-khaṇḍa*.

When the Lord's personal associates had taken birth on the earth, a heavenly voice was heard, "Everyone go to the earth. Don't delay. Our Lord will soon make his appearance from Srimati Sachidevi's womb." Then sounds of "Jaya! Jaya! Glory! Glory!" filled the universe. Overwhelmed with ecstatic love, the demigods, *nāgas*, and human beings looked on. Some said, "It is the eternal spiritual effulgence, the Supreme

Brahman." Others considered the child to be Lord Narayan, who is greater than the greatest and smaller than the smallest. In this way they described the Lord who entered Sachi's womb.

As Sachidevi's womb grew larger and larger, everyone's joy increased more and more. Six months passed and great bliss was manifest in Sachi's womb. Day by day her body grew more and more effulgent. Seeing this, the devotees felt great joy in their hearts. No one knew who it was that had entered Sachi's womb. Everyone speculated on the child's identity. When the sixth month ended, the effulgence in Sachi's womb filled her body and the entire house with light.

At that time, Advaita Acharya arrived unexpectedly. Seeing the *ācārya*, Jagannath Mishra respectfully stood up. Advaita Acharya Gosai is the abode of all transcendental virtues. In all the three worlds, no one is as fortunate and glorious. Jagannath Mishra respectfully offered a sitting place to his guest and humbly placed the dust from Advaita's feet on his head. Sachi-devi washed the feet of their exalted guest with water.

Respectfully gazing at the mother-to-be, Advaita became ecstatic. His two lotus eyes became red with jubilation. Tears flowed from his eyes and his face became red. His limbs trembled. Unable to restrain himself, he spoke broken words. He began circumambulating Sachi, and bowed down before her.

Seeing these unusual activities, Sachi was very surprised and Jagannath Mishra was full of doubt. Unhappy at heart, he said, "Why are you doing this? Why? I don't understand your behavior. Please kindly dispel my doubt."

ācārya kahila — śuna miśra purandara
jānibe sakala pāche — kahila uttara

Advaita Acharya said, "Please hear, O Jagannath Mishra. In the future you will understand it all." That was his reply. (Text 26)

Then Advaita Acharya, who was learned in all the scriptures, the hairs on his body standing erect, began to anoint Sachi's glorious womb with fragrant sandalwood paste. He circumambulated her seven times. Then he bowed down. Without saying a word, he left for his own home.

Sachi and Jagannath Mishra wondered, "Why did he bow down and worship my womb?"

After Advaita Acharya worshiped Sachi's womb, it became a hundred times more effulgent. Sachi forgot herself. She saw that

everything was full of bliss and free from all suffering. Then she saw all the demigods standing before her. Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, Sanaka Kumar, and all the demigods began offering prayers to her womb:

*jaya jaya ananta, advaita, sanātana
jayācyutānanda, nityānanda, janārdana*

“Glory, glory to the limitless, eternal Supreme Lord who has no rival! Glory to the Supreme Lord, abode of eternal bliss and deliverer of his devotees! (Text 33)

*jaya sattva-rajas-tama — prakṛtira para
jaya mahāviṣṇu kāraṇa-samudra-bhitara*

Glory to you who are beyond the material modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance! Glory to you, Lord Maha-Vishnu, who reside in the Karana Ocean! (Text 34)

*jaya paravyoma-nātha mahimā vistāra
jaya sattva, parasattva, viṣṇu-sattoākāra*

Glory to the master of the spiritual sky, of unlimited majesty! Glory to the Lord whose form, transcending ordinary goodness, consists of pure spiritual goodness! (Text 35)

*jaya golokera-pati — rādhāra-nāgara
jaya jaya ananta-vaikuṇṭha-adhīśvara*

Glory to the master of Goloka and the lover of Radha! Glory, glory to the king of limitless Vaikuntha worlds! (Text 36)

*jaya jaya niścanta dhīra-lalita
jaya jaya sarva-manohara nanda-suta*

Glory, glory to you who are playful and graceful! Glory, glory to you, Nanda’s son, who charms the hearts of all! (Text 37)

*ebe kali-yuge śacīgarbhethe prakāśa
āpane bhuñjite āilā āpana-vilāsa*

In the Kali-yuga you have entered Sachi’s womb. You have come here to enjoy pastimes. (Text 38)

*jaya jaya parānanda-dātā ei prabhu
e hena karuṇā āra nāhi haya kabhu*

Glory, glory to our master and giver of transcendental bliss! No one is compassionate like you! (Text 39)

*āpani āpana-dātā hailā kalikāle
pātrāpātra-vicāra nā haiba gadādhare*

In the Kali-yuga you come and give yourself. You don’t consider whether the people are worthy or not to receive your mercy. (Text 40)

*ye prema yāciṇā karoṇ morā saba deve
nā pāila laba-leśa gandha anubhave*

Even though again and again we begged for it, we demigods could not attain even the slightest fragrance of ecstatic prema. (Text 41)

*se prema madhura rasa āpani khāiyā
bhuñjāibe ācaṇḍāle — doṣa nā dekhīyā*

Now you will give the sweet nectar of that divine love to everyone, even the caṇḍālas. They will all taste it. You will not see anyone’s faults. (Text 42)

*tuyā prema-laba-leśa morā yena pāi
tora saṅge rādhā-kṛṣṇa-guṇa yena gāi*

O Lord, please allow us to taste a small particle of that love. Please allow us to sing Sri Sri Radha-Krishna’s glories in your association. (Text 43)

*jaya jaya saṅkīrtana-dātā gaurahari
ihā bali deva-gaṇa pradakṣiṇa kari*

Glory, glory to you, O Sri Gaura-Hari, O Lord who gives the gift of saṅkīrtana!” After speaking these words, the demigods all circumambulated the Lord. (Text 44) ❀

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NABADWIP PASTIMES

Adapted from Srila Narahari Chakravarti’s

Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara 12.3214-3260

One day, Mahaprabhu revealed his astonishing pastimes as a cowherd boy. When Gaurahari remembered His cows, he suddenly began calling out, “Saoli!” “Dhavalī!” — the names of two of Krishna’s favorite cows. He began to twirl a cowherder’s stick, as Ramai, Sundar, and Nityananda joyfully watched.

Another day, Gaura Hari began wandering the streets of Nadia collecting alms. He requested everyone, “Give me something! Give me something!” Although this put some people in great difficulty, still they were unable to refuse. Afterwards they began to suspect that Gaurachand was actually an incarnation of Krishna.

One day, seeing a flower garden, Prabhu Gaura Ray wanted to enjoy pastimes with the flowers. He began picking flowers and throwing them on the heads of his devotees. His devotees, in turn, also threw flowers on the head of Prabhu.

One day, Gadadhara and Gaura Hari sat in the flower garden and became deeply absorbed in playing chess together. On another occasion, Prabhu and his companions played in the Ganga, delightfully throwing water on one another's bodies.

One day on the bank of the Ganga, Prabhu enjoyed a picnic with his companions. Srivas and Murari gathered many items, and in great ecstasy Adwaita directed all of them to sit in a circle, placing leaf plates with rice in front of each of them. First Prabhu began to eat, then everyone else started. With his own hands, Nityananda fed Gaura sweet rice, condensed milk, butter, and cheese. Adwaita then began feeding cheese to Lord Nityananda. Nitai reciprocated by feeding sweets to Adwaita. The devotees watched happily and began exchanging varieties of *prasāda* amongst themselves. After eating, they all drank the cold and pure water of the Ganga. ❀

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O MIND, CHANT THE NAMES OF GAURA AND GOVINDA!

The Gaudiya Poet Premananda Das

For more on Premananda Das, see Bindu 122. ❀

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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e mana, bala re govinda-nāma
āji kālī kari kī āra bhāvīcha
kabe tora ghucibeka kāmā

O my mind, chant the name of Govinda! Day after day is passing, what are you thinking of? When will your material desires subside?

kālī se karibā tumi ye balīcha
āji tā kara nā bhāi
āji yā karibā tā kara ekhani
ki jāni kakhana yāi

"I'll do it tomorrow", you say. Why don't you do it today, O my brother? What you can do today, do it immediately. Who can tell when they will pass away?

e hena kalite mānuṣa-janama
emana āra vā kāte
hari-nāma diyā jagata tārīlā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya yāte

In this age of Kali, where shall you obtain a human birth? It is in this age that Sri Krishna Chaitanya has brought salvation to the world by bestowing the name of Hari.

se tina yugera ācāra-vicāra
ekhana se-saba rākha
vadana bhariyā gaura-hari bala
yugera dharama dekha

Discard the rites and practices of the three previous yugas, and with a loud voice call out the name of Gaura Hari, and thus observe the process for this age!

rasanā vadana vaśera bhitare
kevala balile hay
ālisa kariyā narake yāite
kāra vā e apacaya

Your tongue and mouth are in your control. All you need to do is utter the name of God. Who wants to go to hell through laziness alone!

śamana-kiṅkara aṅguli gaṇiche
jāna nā kakhana pāḍe
kahe premānanda takhana kahibe
āsiyā caṛile ghāre

The messenger of death is counting the minutes with his fingers waiting to pounce on you. Don't you know that any moment he may fall upon you? Premananda says, "Only when he will be on you and seize you by the neck shall you utter the name." ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 174 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

2 April 2008 Śrī Pāpavimocanī Ekādaśī, 12 Viṣṇu, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,061

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PREACHING AND MANAGEMENT

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

(Continued from Bindu 172)



Regarding your questions, the *sannyāsīs* are now devoted fully to traveling and preaching work; management is left to the local temple presidents and the members of the Governing Body Commission. (Letter to Upendra, 4 August 1970.)

You must be attentive that our routine work such as rising early, cleaning, chanting, temple worship, reading, *saṅkīrtana*, etc. should always be maintained at the highest Krishna conscious standard. The smallest neglect or inattention to these routine practices will cause all our other programs to fail. These things are the backbone of spiritual life. It is natural that if these things, like regularly chanting 16 rounds and holding daily *ārati* and *kīrtana*, are observed faithfully, then people will be attracted, our preaching will have effect, and the management of temple affairs will become a very easy matter. (Letter to Kulasekhara, 10 January 1972.)

The duties of the GBC men are now to be just like the duties of the *sannyāsīs*. I want that the GBC men should leave the management of the individual centers to the local presidents and concentrate upon preaching work. They should be constantly traveling from one center

to another center to see how the students are learning and to give whatever advice is necessary for improving the temple standards. In addition, the GBC men will open new centers and distribute literature. They should always be traveling with a *saṅkīrtana* party to accompany them. (Letter to Madhudvisa, 12 June 1972.)

You must become conversant in whatever feature is needed throughout the society. Our first business is to preach to the devotees and to maintain the highest standard of *vaiṣṇava* education. Management must be there as well, just as I am preaching daily from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, but I am also going to the bank, making investments, seeing the trial balance, writing letters, and seeing how things are going on. So you must become expert in all these matters, just as I am giving you example. (Letter to Hrdayananda, 9 July 1972.)

Work out some practical program for seeing that both temple management and outside preaching work go on nicely. Not that I shall leave the temple and let all nonsense go on, nor shall we sit down all day in the temple and stop our preaching. (Letter to Bhakta Das, 26 January 1973.)

ASSOCIATED COUNTERPART

Sri Sajjana Toshani

Vol. XXV June 1927

(Continued from Bindu 172)

True devotees of the absolute truth, Krishna, are the salt of the earth. They are the medicines for those suffering from spiritual sickness. Without their occasional advent and presence, the world

would not be worth living in. Our guru or spiritual guide should be the one who is the best of all such true devotees.

Because the spiritual guide is above all human frailties, ignorance, and weakness and because he is Krishna's own person, Krishna's most beloved, Krishna's associated counterpart, he is the fittest person to guard us against the deceits of illusion or *māyā*. Only God's own person can shield us from the clutches of illusion and confirm by his light of example the importance of unalloyed devotion. There is a healthy contagiousness in his undeviating adherence to the absolute truth, in the example of his devout action. His ever-living words are inspiration to the weak in heart, and healing balm to those who are constantly suffering from spiritual sickness. A spiritual guide is the living beacon on the path of devotion.

But where can this highest ideal be found? The truly sincere and humble soul that earnestly desires to advance in spiritual life will get such an ideal. But if we consciously or unconsciously want to be cheated, we shall accordingly get a cheat. These are the words of Godhead himself:

ye yathā mān prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham

"I deal out justice according to the manner I am approached." [Bg. 4.11] In other words, if one approaches me with a sincere heart, I also deal with him sincerely. I show him the true path by sending my own person to him. On the other hand, he who tries to cheat me is deluded by my *māyā*.

If good guides are rare, much more so are good subjects for guidance. Too many of us want to receive instructions according to our own whims and would be happy to combine our service to God with our service to the world. The *ācāryas* have warned us against this:

loka-rakṣā gaurābhajā ekatro niṣphala

"To try to retain all wordly advantages and to serve God at the same time is incompatible."

If we earnestly and sincerely desire to devote our life for the eternal service of the absolute truth Krishna, we should pray most sincerely to him to supply us with a guide after his own heart (and not after our ever-deceiving heart or emotional fancy). We should never doubt that he will kindly send us his own most trusted and most beloved agent — his associated counterpart. Except for Krishna's own representative, no one is fit to occupy the most responsible office of a spiritual guide.

So we should be most careful in choosing a guru. It is impossible for a conditioned soul who is ever likely to be duped by the senses to choose a guru who is not a thing of this world, who is transcendent, and has condescended to come down to the earth according to God's will.

No professional priest or "sale-tongued" preacher can hold the position of guru. Mercenary people are driven by personal motives, self-interest, and vanity, and are not intent solely on God's glory and the good of the fallen souls, like a true spiritual guide. As a man bound by fetters and handcuffs cannot unchain another man who is in a like predicament, so a man claiming to be guru but who is himself fallen in the clutches of *māyā* cannot free another from the same danger.

No question of heredity can arise in choosing a spiritual guide. As it has been previously said, our spiritual guide should be a God-sent person, the direct representative of Krishna. Mundane reference has no value in his case. Even worldly common sense tells us that the son of a doctor cannot always necessarily be a doctor. Krishna's representative appears in this world irrespective of heredity. Sri Mahaprabhu says:

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei 'guru' haya*

Whether he appears in a brahmin family, whether he is found in the garb of a *sannyāsī*, or even if he makes his appearance in this world in a *śūdra* family, whosoever is versed in *kṛṣṇa-tattva* (the transcendent knowledge of Krishna), he and he alone is fit to be a spiritual guide. [Cc. *madhya* 8.128]

It follows, therefore, that neither an elevationist nor a salvationist is fit to be a guru, because they themselves are in the state of want, *abhāva*, and are not in their natural and true position, *svabhāva*. The man who has lost his natural position, i.e. the eternal service of Krishna, which is the only eternal function of the soul, *jīvātmā*, is in a state of want and led astray by things that are mundane. In this way, sometimes he thinks to make up his shortcomings by turning himself into an elevationist so as to have the taste of *soma* liquor, and to have women, gold and fame in this and afterworlds. Or sometimes, critically ignoring such a hedonistic attitude, he takes a pessimistic view of the world and becomes a salvationist.

Both of them are needy persons, and it is a matter of common sense that one needy person cannot remove the needs of another. The *śāstras* enjoin strict avoidance of any

spiritual dependence on these classes. It is incumbent on us, therefore, to take refuge at the holy feet of a devotee who serves Krishna by all means and at all times.

In conclusion, let us prostrate ourselves at the holy feet of gurudeva, who is no other than the associated counter-part of Krishna. Being kindness incarnate, he is ever busy in kindly operating on the cataract-afflicted eye of ignorance of the *jīvas* with the scalpel of transcendental knowledge, thus opening their eternal spiritual eyes and anointing them with the salve of unalloyed and unmotivated love for Krishna. ❀

THE GRAIN AS BIG AS A HEN'S EGG

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

A *grhamedhī*, a materialistic householder, has only developed temporary bodily relationships. A real *grhastha* has developed a perfect, eternal relationship with Krishna, and he sees everything and every *jīva* in relationship with Krishna. He never says, "This is my property, this is my cultivated land." No. He says that everything belongs to Krishna. No individual ownership. But now a days, everyone is thinking in terms of individual ownership, "my house", "my property". "I am the proprietor!" A real *grhastha* never says like that. Only *grhamedhīs* speak in that way.

The famous Russian writer Leo Tolstoy wrote an essay titled, "A Grain as Big as a Hen's Egg". When I was a teacher, it was part of our secondary course.

Some boys were playing in the sand of a dried up streambed. They found a wonderful thing that looked like a hen's egg but wasn't. Someone was passing by, saw the boys playing, and noticed that they had found something wonderful. That person took it: "This should be given to the King." That was the rule at the time: "If something wonderful is found it must be given to the king." When they brought it to him, the king couldn't understand it. "What is this unusual thing?" Generally kings have some pandits, learned scholars, who know *śāstra*. He called them, and said, "You examine this thing and report to me within seven days what it is. If you can't explain it, your heads will be cut off."

The pandits took it away. They searched through the pages of their *śāstras*. They couldn't find where such a thing was mentioned. "Oh what shall we say, our heads will be cut off? In seven days we have to report." They were very

morose, thinking, and praying to God, "Oh what shall we do?" They put that wonderful thing on a windowsill. Then a hen came and put its beak into it and some portion was removed. Then they saw, "Oh, this is a grain." They reported it to the king, "O lord, this is a grain."

The king said, "Such a grain, it looks as big as a hen's egg. Where and when was it being produced? Give me a report. Otherwise your heads will come off."

The pandits said, "Oh sire, it is a grain. Only the farmers can say. We are pandits, how can we answer these questions? You may ask the oldest farmer in your kingdom. He may be able to say."

The king sent his men: "Find the oldest farmer in my kingdom." One old farmer was found who was ninety-something years old. He could not see nor hear well. His hip was bent and he could barely move. With much difficulty he moved with two crutches and two persons carrying him. He was the oldest man they could find in the country.

With the help of his two helpers and two crutches, the old man came to the king's court. The king showed him this grain. "Examine this grain and tell me, during your time were you producing this type of grain?" The old man examined the grain and said "Oh, no sire. We were not producing such grain during our time. However, my father might be able to say."

The king said, "Is your father still living?"

"Oh yes."

"Where is he?"

He named a place. "He lives there. You may call for him; he might be able to tell you."

The king then sent his men to bring the old man's father. The king was surprised to see that the father was much stronger than the son. He walked with only one crutch and was able to see and hear much better than his son. The king showed him that grain. "Please examine this and tell me whether you were producing this type of grain during your time?"

He examined it and said, "Oh sire, no. During our times we were not producing this sort of grain. However, my father might recognize it."

"Oh, your father is still living?"

"Oh yes."

"Where is he?"

He named a place. "He lives there. You may call for him."

So the king sent his men to bring his father. When his father arrived, the king was surprised to see that he walked without the help of crutches. He looked very young, strong and stout. His hip was not bent. He could see and hear very clearly. All his teeth were still there.

The king gave him that grain. "Please examine and say whether you were producing this type of grain during your time."

He examined it, and said. "Oh, yes! We were producing this grain during our time." Then king asked, "Please show me the plot of land where you were producing this sort of grain."

He said, "We were producing this sort of grain everywhere. During our time there was no individual possession. Everything belonged to the Lord. Those who were of the farmer class, they cultivated the land. They never said, 'This is my plot of land.' There was no individual ownership at all. Everything belonged to Lord and there was no enviousness. No one said, 'No, this is my plot of land! Why are you encroaching on my plot?' There was no jealousy, no fighting, no quarreling. Everything belonged to the Lord. And such grain we were producing! It was so big, so full of vitality and vitamins. Because of that I am still so strong today. However, my son is not like that. My grandson is not like that. During our time there was no monetary system. We just

exchanged things. The farmers would give grains to a carpenter. Whatever we needed the carpenter would give. Similarly we would give grains to the oilman and whatever oil we needed he would give us. We would take grains to the grocer and whatever we needed the grocer would give us. In this way we traded things. The medium of exchange was not money at that time.

No personal ownership, everything belongs to Krishna. That is a *gr̥hastha*. Bhaktivinode Thakur says, 'āmāra' bolite prabhu! āra kichu nāi — "There is nothing I can say is mine. Everything belongs to you. O Lord." [Śaraṇāgati 2.5.1] If there is no individual ownership, then why will there be quarrelling? Why will there be enviousness? Everything belongs to Krishna.

Our Founder-Acharya, Srila Prabhupada, named this the "International Society for Krishna Consciousness". It is very significant that he called it, "Krishna consciousness", not God consciousness, or Lord consciousness, or Nrisimha consciousness, or Rama consciousness, or Vamana consciousness, or Maya consciousness. He did so because developing complete Krishna consciousness is the goal of this rarely achieved human birth. If you understand Krishna, if you develop complete Krishna consciousness, then you can understand that everything belongs to Krishna. Nothing is ours. I belong to Krishna. I don't belong to myself. Therefore, why should there be any enviousness or jealousy?

Srila Prabhupada has written in his purport to Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 5.13.11:

The Krishna consciousness movement aims at creating an atmosphere of non-envy. Of course, it is not possible for everyone to become Krishna conscious, but the Krishna consciousness movement can create an exemplary society wherein there is no envy.

This society for Krishna consciousness is meant to be an exemplary society where there is no envy. This is the purpose of the founder ācārya of this society.

This is Krishna consciousness, and a real *gr̥hastha* is completely Krishna conscious. He never says "I" and "mine". He says, "Everything belongs to you. I cannot say this is mine." Bhaktivinode sings:

*dhana, jana, gr̥ha, dāra 'tomāra' boliyā
rakhā kori āmi mātṛo sevaka hoīyā*

"All wealth, assets, money, home, hearth, family members, and followers, everything belongs to you, O Lord. I am only a caretaker." [Śaraṇāgati 2.5.3] This is *gr̥hastha*. A completely Krishna conscious caretaker. ❧

— From a lecture in Toulouse, France, 15 August 1994.

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

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Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 175 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

14 April 2008 Śrī Rāma-navamī, 24 Viṣṇu, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,067

Highlights

- **BHAKTAS, NOT MUSICIANS**
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
- **THE WASHERMAN'S FORMER BIRTH**
Adapted from Padma Purāṇa
- **NĀMA-TATTVA: NOTHING EQUALS THE HOLY NAME**
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BHAKTAS, NOT MUSICIANS *His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*



My opinion is that it is not necessary for us to utilize these different musical talents for spreading Krishna consciousness. I would rather see people follow strictly the path of Lord Chaitanya and his *saṅkīrtana* devotees. We are using *mṛdaṅga* and *karatāla*, that is enough. We are not musicians. We are *kṛṣṇa-bhaktas*. Therefore we do not stress so much importance on these different musical talents. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is God himself. Had he thought it would have been better to spread Krishna consciousness by another way he would have done so. But no, simply with *mṛdaṅga* and *karatāla*, traveling and chanting Hare Krishna, asking everyone to chant Hare Krishna, preaching simply *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* philosophy, this is the process. There is no need for us to try and add anything to this simple method. It will only be a distraction. Therefore I request you to follow the simple path of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and help me spread this wonderful mission all over the world. Keep yourself pure and fixed up in Krishna consciousness by following the basic principles that I have given; chanting 16 rounds daily, following the

four regulative principles, rising early, attending *maṅgala-ārati* and classes, etc. This is of the utmost importance.

— Letter to Jagadisa Pandita. 28 December 1974.

THE WASHERMAN'S FORMER BIRTH *Adapted from Padma Purāṇa*

In canto five, chapter fifty-seven, Lord Ananta Sesha speaks the following pastime to Vatsyayana Muni:

In the great city of Mithila lived the king named Janak Maharaja. Pleasing his subjects, he ruled righteously. Once when Janak was ploughing the field, an extremely beautiful baby girl came out from the first furrow. Seeing her, Janak Maharaja became extremely happy. He named that fascinating girl "Sita".

One day when Sita was playing as a child in a garden grove, she saw a male and female parrot that delighted her mind. The parrots were affectionately talking to each other in pleasant words, "On the earth, charming Rama will be the king. His wife will be Sita. That intelligent, powerful king, will vanquish his enemies and rule over the earth with her for eleven thousand years. Blessed is that queen Sita, and blessed is Rama."

Hearing the charming tales told by the parrots about her, Maithili, Sita, decided to capture them and ask them the meaning of their conversation. She told her friends,

“Quickly catch this charming pair of birds.” Her friends caught the parrots and brought them to princess Maithili.

Sita comforted them, and said, “Don’t be frightened, dear charming ones. Who are you? Where have you come from? Who is this Rama and Sita that you are speaking about? Where did you hear about them?”

The birds replied, “We have come from the ashram of the great sage Valmiki, who is the best of those who know dharma. He instructed his disciples to daily sing about the future adventures of Lord Ramachandra. All those imminent pastimes were repeatedly heard and memorized by us. Listen to them. At the end we shall tell who that Rama is, who that Janaki (Sita) is, and what will happen to the two of them.

“Glorious Vishnu will divide himself into four and appear at the sacrifice performed by the sage Rishyasringa. Later, he and his brothers accompanied by Vishwamitra will come to Mithila. Then he will break a bow that many kings were unable to wield, and thereby obtain the charming daughter of Janak. O excellent one, we have heard that with her, he will rule over a large kingdom. O beautiful lady, we who had flown to Valmiki’s ashram, heard this and other things told by those who lived there. Now please release us, we desire our freedom.”

Hearing those words, which were very pleasant to the ears, Sita replied to that pair of birds, “Where will that Rama be? Whose son will he be? In what way will he marry his consort? What form will that excellent man have? Tell me all this, and later I will do that which will please you.”

Seeing Janaki and realizing that her heart was oppressed by love, the female parrot told her, “There will be an intelligent mighty king with thousands of chariots. He will be the ruler of the solar dynasty, and the demigods will become victorious by taking shelter of him. He will have three wives, who will be so beautiful that their forms will fascinate even Lord Indra. Four powerful and exalted sons will be born to them. Rama will be the eldest. Bharata will be born after him, then Lakshman will be born, and after him Shatrughna will be born. The magnanimous Rama will also be known as Raghunath. These brothers will have countless names.

“O friend, the face of the powerful Rama will be charming like the whorl of a lotus. His very large eyes will also have the beauty of lotuses. His nose will be raised, large, and charming. His eyebrows will be lovely and beguiling. His beautiful hands will reach to his knees. His small neck will be marked like a conch. His chest will be expansive and captivating, and will have a mark on it. His lotus feet will always be worshipped by his devotees. Raghupati’s form will be like this.

“How can I express his beauty? Even with a hundred mouths one cannot describe him. Then what about birds like me? Seeing his form, even the charming and beautiful Lakshmi was enticed. What lady on the earth will not be enticed? He has great power, great valour, and a very enticing form. Lucky is Sita, who will enjoy with him for myriad years. O beautiful lady, who are you? What is your name and why do you cleverly and respectfully ask me to narrate the account of Rama?”

Hearing the birds tell the story of her birth and life, Sita said to them, “I am that

Nāma-tattva

NOTHING EQUALS THE HOLY NAME

Ādi Purāṇa

*śraddhayā helayā nāma raṭanti mama jantavaḥ
teṣāṁ nāma sadā pārtha vartate hṛdaye mama*

I always remember those who chant my holy names, whether they chant with faith or negligently.

*na nāma sadṛśaṁ jñānaṁ na nāma sadṛśaṁ vratam
na nāma sadṛśaṁ dhyānaṁ na nāma sadṛśaṁ phalam*

There is no knowledge equal to the name, there is no vow equal to the name, there is no meditation equal to the name, and there is no benefit equal to the name.

*na nāma sadṛśaṁ tyāgo na nāma sadṛśaḥ śamaḥ
na nāma sadṛśaṁ puṇyaṁ na nāma sadṛśī gatih*

There is no renunciation equal to the name, there is no discipline equal to the name, there is no virtue equal to the name, and there is no destination equal to the name. ❀

— Quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11.464-466.

Janaki, the daughter of Janak, whom you mentioned. Being allured by your nectarean words, I shall release you when that charming Rama comes to me and not otherwise. Don't fear, I shall caress you and you will stay happily with me."

Hearing these words, the female parrot trembled and was frightened. She said to Janaki, "O good lady, we are birds. We live in trees in the forest. We wander everywhere. We will not be happy being bound up in one place. Moreover, I am pregnant. I promise that if you let me go, after returning to my place and giving birth to young ones I shall come back." Although the female parrot pleaded in this way with Sita, still she did not release her.

Then the male parrot, with his face hung down, spoke. "Sita, release her. Why do you want to keep my beautiful wife? We shall go to the forest together and happily move about. My charming wife is pregnant. After she delivers her young, I shall also come to you."

Sita replied to the male parrot, "O intelligent one, you can go. I shall keep this lady parrot, who is so dear to me, by my side."

The male parrot said, "The words of the saints are true. They have advised that wise persons should remain silent. If we had not spoken to each other while on this tree, we would not be bound up. O beautiful lady, O Sita, I cannot live without my wife. Therefore, O charming one, please release her."

Still, out of attachment to hearing the glories of Lord Ramachandra, Sita refused to release his mate. The parrot's wife then became angry and miserable and cursed the daughter of Maharaja Janak, "Just as you are separating me from my husband, in the same way when you become pregnant you will be separated from Rama." Having spoken, that female parrot, who was miserable due to separation from her husband, uttered the name of Rama and left her body. A divine chariot descended and took her away.

Seeing this, her husband, extremely angry and distressed, fell into the Ganga and drowned himself. His last words were, "I will take birth in Rama's city as a *śūdra*. And due to my words, Sita will become dejected and extremely unhappy due to separation from her husband." That bird was then born as the washerman named Krodhan.

Due to his harsh words, Sita was censured and separated from Rama. On account of that washerman, Sita was exiled to the forest.

According to Garga-saṁhitā 5.10.3-8, Krodhan took birth again in Mathura where he was engaged in washing the clothes of King Kamsa. He received liberation when Krishna killed him to stop his blasphemy. ❀

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VIBHISHAN'S ADVICE

Reverend A. G. Atkins

Part one of a six-part series. For more about Reverend Atkins, see Bindu 116. Giving his final advice to his brother Ravan, Vibhishan spoke as follows:

"Brother! Rama's no mere human ruler of earth,

"But the God of all worlds, lord of death and of birth;

"Undying, unborn, Supreme, all things be-friending,

"In all, over all, unbeginning, unending;

"T'ward all good the twice-born, cows, gods and earth bearing;

"The ocean of kindness, a human form wearing;

"The joy of the good, foe of evil behaviour;

"Of righteousness, scripture and gods the true saviour.

"Be no more his foeman, but bow and adore him;

"The ills of his trusting ones all flee before him.

"Give Sita back to him, nor rouse him unduly;

"The lord Rama worship, who loves all men truly;

"He never forsakes one who seeks his protection,

"E'en tho' it might seem a world-rending defection;

"Know, Ravan, this lord revealed to us is a giver

"Of all good; his name from all sins can deliver.

“O ten-headed ruler, once more I beseech you,
“Again at your feet humbly bowing;
“Give Kosala’s king your true worship, all folly,
“All passion and pride disavowing
“The saintly Pulastya this very same word
“By a faithful disciple sent to me;
“Now deeming the time fitting, I have thus spoken
“That you might receive his words thro’ me.”

—Pages 1009-1010. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987.

FALSE RELIGIONISTS Manu-saṁhitā 4.192-200

*na vāry api prayacchet tu baidāla-vratike dvije
na baka-vratike vipre nāveda-vidi dharma-vit*

One who knows dharma should not offer even water to a *brāhmaṇa* who acts like a cat, nor to a *brāhmaṇa* who acts like a heron, nor to one who is unacquainted with the Veda. (Text 192)

*triṣv apy eteṣu dattaṁ hi vidhināpy arjitaṁ dhanam
dātur bhavaty anarthāya paratrādātur eva ca*

For, property that is given to these three types of persons, even though earned in accordance with prescribed rules, gives benefit neither to the giver nor to the recipient. (Text 193)

*yathā plavenopalena nimajjaty udake taran
tathā nimajjato ’dhaṣṭād ajñau dātṛ-pratīcchakau*



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

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National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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As he who attempts to cross water in a boat of stone sinks to the bottom, in the same way an ignorant donor and an ignorant recipient sink low. (Text 194)

*dharma-dhvajī sadā lubdhaś chādmiko loka-dambhakaḥ
baidāla-vratiko jñeyo hiṁsraḥ sarvābhisandhakaḥ*

One who is always greedy, who waves the flag of virtue (advertises oneself as a virtuous person), who is a hypocrite, a deceiver of others, and is intent on injuring others, is one who acts like a cat. (Text 195)

*adho-dṛṣṭir naiṣkṛtikaḥ svārtha-sādhana-tat-paraḥ
śaṭho mithyā vinītaś ca baka-vrata-carō dvijaḥ*

That *brāhmaṇa* of a cruel disposition, who, with downcast look, is solely intent on attaining his own ends, dishonest and falsely humble, is one who acts like a crane. (Text 196)

*ye baka-vratino viprā ye ca mārjāra-liṅgināḥ
te patanty andha-tāmisre tena pāpena karmaṇā*

Those *brāhmaṇas* who act like cranes, and those who display the characteristics of cats, due to their wicked behavior fall into the hell called Andha-tamishra. (Text 197)

*na dharmasyāpadeśena pāpaṁ kṛtvā vrataṁ caret
vratenā pāpaṁ pracchādya kurvan strī-śūdra-dambhanam*

While committing a sin, one should not perform a penance in the name of dharma. By covering one’s sin with a vow, such a person deceives women and *śūdras* only. (Text 198)

*pratyeha cedṛśā viprā garhyante brahma-vādibhiḥ
chadmanā caritaṁ yac ca vrataṁ rakṣāṁsi gacchati*

The above-mentioned *brāhmaṇas* are censured by those who know the Vedas. Those who perform vows under false pretenses become *rakṣasas*. (Text 199)

*aliṅgī liṅgi-veṣeṇa yo vṛttim upajīvati
sa liṅginām haratyenas tiryag-yonau ca jāyate*

He who gains his livelihood by putting on the dress of a *brāhmaṇa* without actually being one, takes upon himself the sins of all *brāhmaṇas* and is born again in the womb of an animal. (Text 200) ❧

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 176 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

2 May 2008 Śrī Varuthinī Ekadāśī, 12 Madhusudana, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,072

Highlights

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His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

- **GRHASTHA DHARMA AND THE STORY OF THE JACKAL**

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

- **NĀMA-TATTVA: NON-DIFFERENT**

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- **ABANDONING RAVAN**

Reverend A. G. Atkins

- **FOOLISH MIND**

Radha Mohan Das

A LITTLE STRUGGLE IS HEALTHY

His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Regarding the several smaller temples being dependent upon the central temple of Washington D.C., that is up to you to decide, but so far as I am concerned, I have not got much stock in such centralized management or organization. I never wanted any of my temples to be dependent upon other temples. Rather, our main business is to train up men to be self-sufficient and competent in many ways to carry on the preaching work, not to make them into specialists or to minimize their responsibility by centralizing everything. If each center must rely upon its own strength to stand, that will be a better training ground for the devotees. We must learn how to do all kinds of varieties of engagements for Krishna's service. Not that we shall expect others to act for us and thus avoid something ourselves. For reasons of spreading the Krishna consciousness movement, we may sometimes centralize, just like the books and money for the BBT are managed by Karandhara

in Los Angeles. ... If that were left for each temple to manage, there would be great difficulty and the books would not get printed, paid for, nor distributed widely. So in that case, centralized management is preferable. But in the case of new temples, it is better if they have to struggle a little while to establish themselves in their cities, become familiar with the local city officials and leading citizens, and elicit support from all quarters of the city. Otherwise these things will be neglected and there will be a false dependency upon outside supplies. This will deteriorate everything. The purpose of our Krishna consciousness movement is to create first-class servants of Krishna. That means they know how to do everything. ❀

— Letter to Damodara, 9 January 1973.

GRHASTHA DHARMA AND THE STORY OF THE JACKAL

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

There is a sweet called "dilikā laḍḍū". It is said that one who eats it laments, and one who has not eaten it laments. One who has become a *grhastha* and has experienced the nature of sexual enjoyment, says, "No more! No more! No more!"

There is a story in this regard. Once there was a jackal that saw a jungle of sweet sugarcane. He entered into it and had the desire to eat that sugarcane. Then he saw a round-shaped wasp's nest. He thought, "Oh, this big ball is the fruit of sugarcane. Sugarcane is so sweet, so the fruit must be much sweeter. Therefore I will eat the fruit first, then I'll eat the sugarcane." So he bit into that nest and the wasps came out and began stinging him. "WHAAAAH! NO MORE! NO MORE! NO MORE! NO MORE! "

Now you have gained a nice experience. No more eating that ball-like fruit. That is why guru says, "All right, go, become a *grhastha*. Accept a wife, enjoy, gain some experience, and get the reaction. Then you will give up this thing."

In *Bhāgavatam* (11.18.43), Krishna describes to Uddhava the duty of a *grhastha*:

*brahmacaryam tapaḥ śaucaṁ santoṣo bhūta-sauhṛdam
grhasthasyāpy ʔtau gantuḥ sarveṣāṁ mad-upāsanam*

A householder may approach his wife for sex only at the time prescribed for begetting children. Otherwise, the householder should practice celibacy, austerity, cleanliness of mind and body, satisfaction in his natural position, and friendship toward all living entities. Worship of Me is to be practiced by all human beings, regardless of social or occupational divisions.

Celibacy should be practiced by everyone, *brahmacārī*, *grhastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsī*. A *grhastha* is also a *brahmacārī*. He is known as *upakurvāṇa-brahmacārī*. There are two types of *brahmacārīs*: *naiṣṭika-brahmacārī*, and *upakurvāṇa-brahmacārī*. One who strictly follows the rules and regulations of *brahmacārī āśrama*, who becomes free from all desires for enjoyment, who never discharges even a drop of semen is a *naiṣṭika-brahmacārī*. He is free from all material desires. *brāhmaṇo 'gnir iva jvalan* — He is effulgent like fire [*Bhāg.* 11.17.36]. He does not marry and remains in the guru's *āśrama* until the end of life. He is a proper candidate for *sannyāsa*.

However, if the guru observes that his disciple has material desires and cannot remain celibate throughout his life, then he allows him to go and marry. That disciple has already practiced *brahmacharya*. He has already been given training how to control

Nāma-tattva

NON-DIFFERENT

*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode
Śrī Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi, chapter one*

For the immediately preceding verses, see Bindu 122.

*yei ta' sādhana sei sādhya yabe haila
upāya upeya madhye bheda nā rahila*

[Haridas Thakur told Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu:] "In chanting the holy name, the goal and the way to attain it are not different. (79)

*sādhyera sādhanē āra nāhi antarāya
anāyāse tare jīva tomāra kṛpāya*

"And, by your mercy, the conditioned soul proceeds easily on the path, without any obstruction. (80)

*āmi ta' adhama ati majiyā viṣaye
nā bhajinu nāma tava ati mūḍha ha'ye*

"I am fallen. I am plunged in an ocean of material sense objects. O Lord, I am such a fool that I did not worship your holy name." (81)

*dara dara dhārā cakṣe brahma-haridāsa
paḍila prabhura pade chāḍiyā niśvāsa*

Sighing, and with tears streaming from his eyes, Brahma-Haridas fell before Lord Chaitanya's lotus feet and spoke as follows. (82)

*hari bhakta bhakti mātṛe vinoda yāhāra
harināma cintāmaṇi jīvāna tāhāra*

"May the touchstone of the holy name become the very life of the souls whose only joy is devotional service to Lord Krishna and his devotees." (83) ❀

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his mind and senses during his *brahmacārī* period. So unless one becomes a *brahmacārī* in the guru's *āśrama*, he cannot become a proper *gṛhastha*. He becomes a *gṛhamedhī*, attached to home and hearth, wife, son, daughter, and all enjoyment. Prahlad Maharaja has said that he is *adānta-gobhiḥ*, he has no control over his senses. *punaḥ punaś carvita-carvaṇānām* — Again and again he is chewing the chewed. [Bhāg. 7.5.30]

So celibacy comes first. The *gṛhastha* is also a type of *brahmacārī* who follows strict regulations. The proper time for procreation is after the wife's menstruation. A proper *gṛhastha* will only go to his wife for procreation at that time. The purpose of marriage is to produce a worthy son. What is a worthy son? *Kṛṣṇa-bhakta-putra* — a *vaiṣṇava* son; a child who will become a devotee, and render service to the senses of Krishna. In the *Gītā* [7.11] Krishna says, *dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmō 'smi bharatarṣabha* — "I am sex life that is not contrary to the principles of religion." That is *gṛhastha-dharma*. This is a principle of religion: a *gṛhastha* must go to his wife during the proper period after her menstruation, and when she is willing and desirous of having a child. That is dharma, religious principle, *gṛhastha-dharma*. ❧

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar. 12 April 1995.

ABANDONING RAVAN

Rev. A. G. Atkins

Part two of a six-part series

For more about Reverend Atkins, see Bindu 116.

"Now Malyavant, Ravan's most expert advisor, These words hearing, thought nothing happier or wiser;

"Your brother," he said, "is a gem of true learning;

"My lord, his words heed then, your heart to them turning."

"Away, rascals," Ravan said, wrathful eyes rolling,

"Will none chase them from me! My foe they're extolling!"

Then Malyavant left him and home again went;

But Vibhishan said humbly, on one purpose bent,

"Scriptures new and old tell us — a truth firmly fixed —

"Good and evil, my lord, are in ev'ry heart mixed;

"When the good mind prevails, then true riches are found;

"But when evil prevails, then for trouble we're bound;

"In your heart evil dwells and the good must oppose;

"Thus you think foes are friendly, and true friends are foes;

"So for Sita you're deeply, unlawfully fond, "Death-like foe to us demons all others beyond.

"O my brother, my lord, your feet clasping, I ask

"That you heed what I say in true love;

"Send back Sita to Rama, true welfare will be

"Yours then all other blessings above."

This counsel that Vibhishan gave him accorded With great truths by scripture and wise men recorded;

But, hearing it, Ravan enraged rose and said, "Death, you rascal, is hov'ring just over your head!

"From birth you have always been fed at my table,

"Yet you join my foes gladly as soon as you're able!

"Say, wretch! Is there any throughout all creation

"Whom my strong arm has not brought down from his station?

"You dwell in my town, but consort with a hermit;

"Fool! Go and teach him what is truth, as you term it!"

This saying, a kick to Vibhishan he gave; But his brother still patiently to his feet clave.

(In this, Uma, we see a saint's greatness — that should

Any do evil to him, he answers with good.)

Said Vibhishan, "As father — good! — me you may kill;

"But to find good serve Rama, I say to you still."

With his comrades he left by the path of the sky,
And in going told what he was doing, and why:

“What lord Rama determines, my lord, comes to pass;
“Fateful death now your council approaches;
“I’m going to Rama for Succour at once;
“None can heap on me now vile reproaches.”

— Pages 1011-1013. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987.

FOOLISH MIND

*By the medieval poet
Radha Mohan Das*

For more information about Radha Mohan Das, see Bindu number 95.

(Dhānaśī-rāga)

*bhaja mana satata ha-iyā nirdvandva
rādhā-kṛṣṇa parama-sukha-dāyaka rasamaya paramānanda*

(Refrain) O my mind, turning away from the dualities of this world, always worship Radha-Krishna, who are sweet like nectar and who bestow the topmost happiness and bliss.

*cañcala viṣaya-viṣa sukha māni khāosi
nā jānasi iha mati manda*



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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श्री कृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

para-kāle nikāṭa

bujhaha abahuñ karu andha

marāṇa-duḥkha-deyaba

O my mind, you are an ignorant fool. You think drinking the poison of fickle material sense gratification will make you happy. Please know that in the course of time that poison becomes a monster, bringing torment and death, and making one blind.

mohe duḥkha-bhāgī

karaṇa naha samucita

to hāma janama-bandhu

nija duḥkha jāni

abahuñ smaraṇa karu

yo tuhuñ karuṇāka sindhu

O my mind, it is not right that you make me suffer in this way. You and I have been friends from birth. Aware that material sense gratification will bring only torment, you should meditate on that ocean of mercy.

o pada-paṅkaja-prema-

sudhā pibi pibi

dūra kara nija duḥkha-kanda

e rādhā-mohana kaha

tejaha micha-i moha

yaichana hata nija bandha

Drink, drink the sweet nectar of love for their lotus feet. Throw far away the sense gratification that becomes the root of torments. This Radha Mohan Das says: “Turn away from the illusions of this world, illusions that keep you bound in this prison.”

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HARSH WORDS

DON'T AFFECT SAINTS

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 6.10.28

sarve prayāsā abhavan vimoghāḥ

kṛtāḥ kṛtā deva-gaṇeṣu daityaḥ

kṛṣṇānukūleṣu yathā mahatsu

kṣudraiḥ prayuktā ūṣatī rūkṣa-vācaḥ

When insignificant persons use rough words to cast false, angry accusations against saintly persons, their fruitless words do not disturb the great personalities. Similarly, all the efforts of the demons against the demigods, who were favorably situated under the protection of Krishna, were futile.

— Translation by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Singapore. 1982.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 177 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

15 May 2008 Mohinī Ekādaśī, 25 Madhusudana, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,077

Highlights

- **A VAISHNAVA CAN DO ANY SERVICE**
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
- **REFORMING THE REFORMER**
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada
- **THE APPEARANCE OF RADHA RAMAN**
- **THE BEST AND ONLY MEANS**
- **MERCIFUL RAMA**
Rev. A. G. Atkins
- **EATEN BY WORMS**
Srila Lochan Das Thakur

A VAISHNAVA CAN DO ANY SERVICE

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Some of you are preaching, and some of you are cleaning the temple. It does not mean that a *saṁnyāsī* who is preaching is better than the man who is cleaning. Their position as *vaiṣṇava* is the same. For management one is cleaning, one is overseeing construction, and one is going to preach. It is not that, "I have taken *saṁnyāsa*, therefore I cannot do anything more." If need be, he has to act as a *kṣatriya*, or a *śūdra*. It doesn't matter.

For management, these divisions must be there. Otherwise it will be mismanagement. A *vaiṣṇava* doing the work of a *śūdra* does not mean he has become a *śūdra*. He is a *vaiṣṇava*. Try to understand this point. Just like you may play a king or queen on stage, but you are neither king nor queen. That is stage play. Similarly, to manage things in the material world one has to do the needful. ❧

— Morning walk conversation on 12 March 1974 in Vrindavan.

REFORMING THE REFORMER

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*

The world stands in no need of any reformer. The world has a very competent person for guiding its minutest happenings. The person who determines that there is scope for reform of the world, himself stands in

need of reform. The world goes on in its own perfect way. No person can deflect it even the breadth of a hair from the course chalked out for it by providence. When we perceive any change being actually effected in the course of events of this world by the agency of any particular individual, we must know very well that the agent possesses no real power at any stage. The agent finds himself driven forward by a force belonging to a different category from himself. The course of the world does not require to be changed by the agency of any person. What is necessary is to change our outlook on this world. This was done for the contemporary generation by the mercy of Sri Chaitanya. It can only be known to recipients of his mercy. The scriptures declare that it is only necessary to listen with an open mind to the name of Krishna from the lips of a bona fide devotee. As soon as Krishna enters the listening ear, he clears up the vision of the listener so that he no longer has any ambition of ever acting the part of a reformer of any other person, because he finds that nobody is left without the very highest guidance. It is therefore his own reform that he is increasingly able to realize, by the eternally continuing mercy of the Supreme Lord. ❧

— From *The Harmonist*, May 1932, issue number 11.
Article originally titled, "Sree Chaitanya in South India."
Pages 325-326.

[next column](#) ❧



THE APPEARANCE OF RADHA RAMAN*Adapted from**Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur's
Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara 4.312-336*

The beautiful expression of Radha Raman became famous throughout the world and the residents of Vrindavan were delighted at the time of the deity's installation. I will tell you in brief how Radha Raman of Gopal Bhatta Goswami became manifest.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu ordered Sri Gopal Bhatta Goswami to find Lord Hari in a *śālagrāma-śilā*. Sri Gopal Bhatta Goswami told Sri Rupa Goswami about Mahaprabhu's instruction, and Rupa Goswami lovingly replied, "Sri Govindadev is everything to you, yet it is his desire that you serve him separately." After a few days, Lord Hari manifested himself in a three-fold bending form out of the *śālagrāma-śilā*. Who can understand the great fortune of Sri Gopal Bhatta Goswami by which Radha Raman became self-manifest in a beautiful form?

*śrī govinda, gopīnātha, madana-mohana
krame e tinera mukha, vakṣa, śrī caraṇa*

In Radha Raman's beautiful form were Sri Govinda's face, Sri Gopinath's chest, and Sri Madan Mohan's feet. (Text 321)

The three Lords were all manifest in the form of Radha Raman, a combination that Gopal Bhatta Goswami had cherished before the Lord's self-manifestation. Sanatana Goswami, Bhugarbha Goswami, and other Goswamis were very satisfied to see the system by which Gopal Bhatta served Radha Raman. On the auspicious day of the full moon in the month of *Vaiśākha*, Radha Raman was installed on the *simhāsana*. A great festival was held to mark the installation of the deity, and since then Radha Raman has become famous throughout the world as the Lord who was bound by the love of Gopal Bhatta. The self-manifestation of Radha Raman has been described in Sanskrit in the book *Sādhana Dīpikā*:

*govinda-pāda-sarvasvaṁ vande gopāla-bhaṭṭakam
śrīmad-rūpājñāyā yena pṛthak sevā prakāśitā*

I worship Sri Gopal Bhatta Goswami, whose life and soul were the lotus feet of Sri Govinda Deva of Vrindavan, but who accepted the task of serving him separately according to the instruction of Sri Rupa Goswami. (Text 327)

Nāma-tattva**THE BEST AND ONLY MEANS***Srila Jagadananda Pandit's
Śrī Prema-vivarta, chapter 19*

śrī nāma-i eka mātra o śreṣṭha sādhana (The holy name is the incomparable, top-most process.)

*śuna he bhakata vṛnda kali kālera dharma
śrī kṛṣṇa kīrtana vinā āra nāhi karma*

My dear devotees! In Kali-yuga there is no spiritual activity and religious practice to surpass congregational chanting of Lord Krishna's holy name. (Text 3)

*karma jñāna yoga dhyāna durbala sādhana
aprākṛta sampatti lābhera nahe krama*

Fruitive activities, cultivation of knowledge, yoga, and meditation are ineffectual processes for spiritual elevation. They cannot lead one to the transcendental realm of absolute realization. (Text 4)


*dharma vrata, tyāga, homa sakala-i prākṛta
aprākṛta-tattva lābhe nāhi kare hita*

Prescribed religious duties, penances, and sacrifices are all mundane activities. Hence, they cannot help one reach the transcendental abode. (Text 5)

*kṛṣṇa-nāma uccāraṇe, smaraṇe, śravaṇe
aprākṛta-siddhi haya bale śruti-gaṇe*

The *śruti* scriptures declare that complete spiritual perfection is achieved only through chanting, hearing and remembering Krishna's name, fame, pastimes, etc. (Text 6)

*śrī-nāma-rahasya sarva-śāstrete dekhibā
nāma uccāraṇa-mātra cit-sukha labhibā*

All scriptures have revealed the highest esoteric truth about the holy name and its glories. One experiences spiritual bliss immediately upon chanting the holy name. (Text 7) 

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*śrī rādhā-ramaṇo devaḥ sevāyā viṣayo mataḥ
kṛtinā śrīla-rūpeṇa so 'yaṁ yo 'sau vibhāvitaḥ
ājñāyāḥ kāraṇam tatra pramāṇikam uthācchrutam*


The worshipable object of that separated service was Sri Radha Ramandev. Govindadev, who became manifest by the great love of Sri Rupa Goswami, was the same as Radha Raman. The reason behind the separate service of Gopal Bhatta has been learned from different reliable persons. (Text 328)

*śrīmat prabodhānandasya bhrātus-putra-kṛpālayam
śrīmad-gopāla-bhattam taṁ naumi śrī vraja-vāsinam*

I worship that inhabitant of Vraja, Sri Gopal Bhatta, son of the elder brother of Sri Prabodhananda Saraswati. (Text 329, end of the *Sādhana Dīpikā* quote)

*śrī rādhikā-sahita śrī madana-gopāla
vr̥ndāvanēśvarī-saha śrī govinda-lāla
vr̥ṣabhānu-kumārī saha śrī gopīnātha
darśana-sobāya janma mānila kṛtārtha*

If one can see Sri Madan Gopal with Sri Radhika, Sri Govinda with Vrindavaneshwari, and Sri Gopinatha with Sri Vrishabhanu Kumari, his life will surely be successful. (Texts 330-331)

While serving separately, Sri Gopal Bhatta's eagerness increased and he understood that it was the Lord's desire to be served in this separate way. 

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MERCIFUL RAMA

Rev. A. G. Atkins

Part three of a six-part series

For more about Reverend Atkins, see Bindu 116.

As Vibhishan went off, his mind having revealed,
From that moment the fate of the demons was sealed.

(Those, Bhavani, who treat saintly men with contempt,
Bring ruin whatever for good they attempt.)
Since King Ravan drove Vibhishan from him in shame,
He was dogg'd by misfortune and robb'd of his fame.

But Vibhishan sought Rama, by eagerness fired,
Cherishing in his heart many things long desired:

"I shall now see those lotus feet, red as the dawn,

"Tender, blessed, for all those to his service drawn;

"At whose touch the saint's wife found life till then denied,

"And the Dandaka forest was well sanctified;

"Which the daughter of Janak caressed and embraced,

"And which after the false deer so eagerly raced;

"That as lotuses in Siva's lake-like heart live —
"I shall see them! To me also blessing they'll give.

"Feet below'd from which sandals were taken by Bharat,

"And placed in his heart as their shrine;

"I am going today those adored feet to find,
"And shall see them with these eyes of mine.

These things lovingly pond'ring, his spirit revived,

And he soon at the opposite sea-shore arrived;

But the monkeys said, seeing him come, "We suppose

"He has come as a special envoy from our foes."

So they stopp'd him; their captive to Sugriv they brought,

Told the news of their capture and asked what he thought;

Sugriv, coming to Rama, said: "Here we have, sire,

"Ravan's brother; to meet with you is his desire."

Rama said to him, "Friend, tell me what you advise,"

He replied, "My lord, hear me! We need to be wise;

"Demons' tricks we don't know, they may well give us pause;

"For some purpose he's come, but who knows what's the cause?"

“I imagine the rascal has come here to spy;
“We should keep him here bound securely,
say I.”

Rama said, “Sound advice, friend, to me have
you giv’n;
“But I’m bound to befriend all to me for aid
driv’n.”

Hanuman rejoiced, hearing his lord such
words speak:
“Blessed lord, dear are all those who aid from
you seek!” ❀

— Pages 1013-1015. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987.

EATEN BY WORMS

Srila Lochan Das Thakur

(Bhāṭiyāri-rāga)

vrajendra-nandana bhaje yei jana
sa-phala jīvana tāra
tāhāra upamā vede nāhi sīmā
tri-bhuvane nāhi āra

Those who worship the son of the king of
Vraja attain the goal of life. According to the
Vedas, in all the three worlds one cannot find
anything to compare to them.

emana mādghava nā bhaje mānava
kakhana mariyā yābe



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श्री कृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

sei se adhama prahāriyā yama
raurave kṛmite khābe

But when those who do not worship Lord
Madhava die, Yamaraj punishes such despicable
souls in the hell named Raurava, where
they are eaten by worms.

tārapara āra pāpī nāhi chāra
saṁsāra jagata mājhe
kona kāle tāra gati nāhi āra
michāi bhramicha kāje

In this world of birth and death no one is
more worthless than such sinful souls. They
achieve no beneficial end and all their efforts
come to naught.

locana dāsa bhakati āśa
hari guṇa kahi likhi
hena rasa sara mati nāhi yāra
tāra mukha nāhi dekhi

I, Lochan Das, speak and write of Lord
Hari’s glories, desiring to attain devotion. I
will not even look at the face of one who does
not find delight in tasting the sweet nectar of
such glories. ❀

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MOONLIKE MUKUNDA

Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhupada’s
Lalita-mādhava 1.1

sura-ripu-sudṛśāṁ uroja-kokāṇ
mukha-kamalāni ca khedayann akhaṇḍaḥ
ciram akhila-suhṛc-cakora-nandī
dīśatu mukunda-yaśaḥ-śasī mudam vaḥ

The beautiful moonlike glories of Mukunda
give distress to the lotuslike faces of the wives
of the demons and to their raised breasts, which
are like gleaming *cakravāka* birds. Those glories,
however, are pleasing to all his devotees, who
are like cakora birds (who are said to live solely
on moon rays). May those glories forever give
pleasure to you all.

This verse also appears as Cc. antya 1.175 ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 178 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

31 May 2008 Aparā Ekādaśī, 11 Trivikrama, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,085

Highlights

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• HEARING AND CHANTING IS ETERNAL

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• 108 OBEISANCES TO GANGADEVI

Maharaja Bhagiratha

• NAMA-TATTVA: FRIENDS OF ALL

• WONDERFUL KRISHNA

Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan

ADVANCEMENT IS NOT DEPENDENT ON EXTERNAL CONDITIONS

*His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*



We should never think of our so-called advancement as being conditioned by, or dependent upon, some set of material circumstances such as marriage, *vānaprastha*, this, or that. The mature understanding of Krishna consciousness is that whatever condition of life I am in at present, that is Krishna's special mercy upon me. Therefore let me take advantage of it in the best way possible to spread this Krishna consciousness movement and conduct my spiritual master's mission. If I consider my own personal progress, happiness, or any other thing personal, that is a material consideration.

... One mistake of judgment often made by neophyte devotees is that any time there is some disturbance or difficulty, they are considering that the conditions or the external circumstances under which the difficulty took place are the cause of the difficulty itself. That is not the fact. In this material world there is always some difficulty, no matter in this situation or that situation. Therefore simply changing my

occupation or my status of life will not help anything. Because the real fact is that if there is any difficulty with others, that is my lack of Krishna consciousness, not theirs. Krishna says that his dearest devotee is one who does not put others into difficulty, in fact, who puts no one else into difficulty.

... Of course, our occupational duty is to be preachers of Krishna consciousness. So we must stick to that business under all circumstances. That is the main thing. Therefore, whether one is married, unmarried, or divorced, in whatever condition of life, my preaching does not depend on these things. ❧

— Letter to Madhukara, 4 January 1973.

HEARING AND CHANTING IS ETERNAL

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

This *navadhā-bhakti*, nine-fold devotional service, is eternal. It will go on forever, even after the attainment of *siddhi*, perfection. And what is that *siddhi*? That is *prema*, love. That is the ultimate perfection, *siddhi*. So after the attainment of *siddhi*, that is, after the attainment of *bhāva* or *prema*, this *śravaṇam-kīrtanam* will continue. It will never cease, because it is an eternal activity. ❧

— Excerpted from a lecture on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, ādi 11.7, Bhubaneswar, Orissa, 1993.

[next column](#) ❧



108 OBEISANCES TO GANGADEVI

Based on Maharaja Bhagiratha's
Gāṅgā-sahasra-nāma

- om gaṅgāyai namaḥ* — Obeisances to the Ganga.
om vegavatyaḥ namaḥ — Obeisances to she who moves swiftly.
om bala-priyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the dear one of Balaram.
om brahmāṇḍa-bhedinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who broke through the covering of the universe.
om brahma-rūpāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she of spiritual form.
om veṇī-dharāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the bearer of currents.
om balavatyaḥ namaḥ — Obeisances to she of great strength.
om vṛndeśyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the controller of the multitudes.
om varṇa-brahma-rūpāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who appears as the Vedas.
om bhairava-priyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the dear one of Lord Shiva.
om viṣṇu-padyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who has issued forth from the feet of Lord Vishnu.
om bhāgīrathyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who was brought down to earth by King Bhagirath.
om bhadrayai namaḥ — Obeisances to the auspicious one.
om bhūmi-bhedinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the divider of the earth.
om bhavyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the beautiful one.
om bhava-duḥkha-nivārinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who wards off misery.
om mandākinīyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who flows slowly through the heavens.
om mukti-pradāyinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the bestower of liberation.
om mahēśvaryai namaḥ — Obeisances to the mighty goddess.
om mālāvatyaḥ namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is adorned with a garland.
om makara-vāhinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who rides on a crocodile.
om laya-pradāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the bestower of liberation.
om guhā-vidārinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the destroyer of all that is hidden.
om sarva-sukha-pradāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the bestower of all kinds of happiness.
om sarva-divya-rupāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she whose form is all divine.

- om varuṇānanda-kārinyai namaḥ* — Obeisances to she who gives pleasure to Varuna.
om kīrti-matyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the famous one.
om kalpa-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who remains for eons.
om gagana-bhedinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who pierces the sky.
om gopa-vallabhāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is the beloved of the cowherds.
om gati-dāyinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the bestower of the ultimate goal of life.
om cakora-nayanyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who possesses eyes like a cakora bird.
om candra-maṇḍala-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides along with the moon [on Lord Shiva's head].
om jala-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides in water.

Nāma-tattva

FRIENDS OF ALL

Sanskrit verses quoted in
Hari-bhakti-vilāsa

*govindeti mudā yuktāḥ kīrtayed yas tv ananya-dhīḥ
pāvanena ca dhanyena teneyam pṛthivī dhṛtā*

One who joyfully chants the holy name “Govinda” with utmost attention is certainly a glorious and pure-hearted soul. Indeed, such a person sustains the earth. (*Laghū-bhāgavatāmṛta*, quoted in *Hbv.* 11.349)

*na caivam ekam vaktāraṁ jhṛvā rakṣati vaiṣṇavī
aśrāvya bhagavat-khyātim jagat kṛtsnam punāti hi*

It is not that one who is attached to chanting the holy name of Lord Vishnu only purifies himself. He can purify the entire world by propagating the glories of chanting the Lord's holy names. (*Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*, quoted in *Hbv.* 11.350)

*te santaḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ nirupādḥika-bāndhavāḥ
ye nṛsimha bhavan-nāma gāyanty uccair mudānvitāḥ*

My dear Lord, those who loudly chant your holy names with jubilation are to be considered saintly persons. They are genuine, selfless friends of all living entities. (*Nṛsimha Purāṇa* quoted in *Hbv.* 11.352) ❧

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om jāhnavyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the daughter of Jahnu.

om jyoti-rūpāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she whose form is effulgent.

om tapasvinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who performs great penances.

om tāpa-nāśinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who removes distress.

om taraṅginyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she whose waves move restlessly.

om tīrtha-stutāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is glorified by the holy places.

om tīrtha-vandīyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is to be praised by the holy places.

om durgama-priyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is dear to the ocean.

om dīpta-rūpinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she of brilliant form.

om trinetṛāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the three-eyed one.

om trailokya-pāvanyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the deliverer of the three worlds.

om nārāyaṇyai namaḥ — Obeisances to Narayani.

om mānasī-gaṅgāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who emanated from the mind of the Lord.

om ārogya-dāyinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who bestows good health.

om sarva-duḥkha-praśamanyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the dispeller of all miseries.

om sahasrākṣyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who possesses a thousand eyes.

om adri-rāja-sūtāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the daughter of the king of the mountains.

om muktāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the liberated one.

om mātāṅgyai namaḥ — Obeisances to Matangi.

om mano-ramāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who pleases the mind.

om mati-dātryai namaḥ — Obeisances to the giver of intelligence.

om yaśasvinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the famous one.

om yugeśvāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the controller of the yugas.

om yajña-rūpāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the form of sacrifice.

om amṛta-pradāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the bestower of nectar.

om agha-hārinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the remover of sin.

om ramanīyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is truly delightful.

om rāja-pūjāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is worshiped by kings.

om rāja-rājeśvāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is the controller of the king of kings.

om roga-hārinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the remover of disease.

om śailendra-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides in the Himalayas.

om śuddhāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the pure one.

om śaila-nandinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the daughter of Himavat and Mena.

om śiva-mastaka-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides on the head of Lord Shiva.

om śuddha-srotāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she whose currents are purifying.

om śakti-rūpinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she of powerful form.

om śaṅkara-priyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the dear one of Lord Shiva.

om śiva-sīmantinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the part in the hair of Lord Shiva.

om śveta-gaṅgāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the white Ganga.

om svarga-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides in the heavens.

om śāpa-mocanyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who relieves one from curses.

om śruti-gamyāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is accessible through the Vedas.

om śaraṇa-pradāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the bestower of protection.

om aiśvarya-dāyinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the granter of opulence.

om sānandāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the joyful one.

om naraka-hārinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who delivers one from hell.

om nabho-maṇḍala-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides in the sky.

om nīra-rūpāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who possesses a form of water.

om niṣkalāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the unbroken one.

om parama-devatāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the supreme goddess.

om pīyūṣa-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides in nectar.

om padma-hastāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who possesses lotus hands.

om pīyūṣa-kara-śobhitāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is beautified by nectar.

om aparājitāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the unconquerable one.

om ananta-tīrthāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she of unlimited holy places.
om pāśāṇa-bhedinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is the cleaver of stone.
om pāpa-saṁhāra-kārinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the destroyer of sin.
om padma-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who resides on a lotus.
om puṇya-kṣetrāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the abode of piety.
om pāvanyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the sacred one.
om patitoddhārinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the deliverer of the fallen.
om pālīkāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is the guardian.
om pavitrāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the purifier.
om pīta-vāsinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who wears yellow garments.
om paramārthāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is a matchless attainment.
om phullāravinda-locanāyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the possessor of eyes like blooming lotuses.
om brahmānyai namaḥ — Obeisances to Brahmani.
om brahma-rūpinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who possesses a spiritual form.
om viśvato-mukhyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who can see in all directions.
om vaiṣṇavyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the devotee of Vishnu.

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
 Gopal Jiu Publications
 c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
 National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
 Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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om viṣṇu-svarūpinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who is the very form of Vishnu.
om vareśvaryai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who can bestow all benedictions.
om sukha-rūpinyai namaḥ — Obeisances to she who possesses a blissful form.
om svar-dhunyai namaḥ — Obeisances to the river of the heavens. ❧

— From *Śrī Śrī Gaṅgā Mahimāṁṛta*, compiled by Sri Taraka Brahma Das. Published by Krishna Bhavanamrita Sangha (ISKCON). Mayapur. 2006. Above portion, found on pages 126-128, translated by Sri Jambavan Das.

WONDERFUL KRISHNA

Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan's
Śrī Aiśvarya-kādambinī

śrī-gokule harir asau vraja-nātha-sūnuḥ
śrī-carcite bahu-sakho'sti sa-bhṛtya-vargaḥ
śrī-rādhikā-priya-sakhībhir adhiśvarīyaṁ
saṁsevate sva-sadṛśībhir ananya-vṛttiḥ

Accompanied by many friends and servants, Lord Hari, the prince of Vraja, stays in the beautiful and opulent realm of Gokul. Sri Radhika, along with her friends, who are all goddesses like her, continually serve him without engaging in any other activity. (1.8)

madhuraiśvarya-caritra-rūpavattvān
madhurād veṇuṣ avāc ca nanda-sūnuḥ
priyatamatā-pūrṇatamāj jana-vrajāc ca
sphuṭam uktaḥ kavībhir vibhūr varīyaṇ

Because of his great handsomeness, sweetness, charm, and opulence, because of the musical sound of his flute, because he is filled with love, and because of his host of friends and relatives, great poets and philosophers say that Lord Krishna, the son of Maharaj Nanda, is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. (1.10)

janakam upāgataḥ sadasi nanda-nṛpaṁ capalo
dhyta-vara-bhūṣaṇo madhura-bhāṣaṇo moda-karaḥ
alika-lasan-masī-kalita-candra-kalaḥ kutukī
harir akhilān vyadhād aticiraṁ vīramat-karaṇān

Sometimes restless, curious Krishna would approach his father, King Nanda, in the midst of the royal assembly. His forehead as splendid as the crescent moon, his eyes decorated with black ointment, and his words very sweet and charming, he delighted everyone and kept them from their business for a very long time. (6.7) ❧

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 179 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

14 June 2008 Pāṇḍavā-nirjala Ekādaśī, 25 Trivikrama, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,305

Highlights

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Rev. A. G. Atkins

GURU IS NOT A DECORATION

*His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

Unless one is perfectly anxious to inquire about the way of perfection, there is no necessity of approaching a spiritual master. A spiritual master is not a kind of decoration for a householder. Generally a fashionable materialist engages a so-called spiritual master without any profit. The pseudo-spiritual master flatters the so-called disciple, and thereby both the master and his ward go to hell without a doubt. Maharaja Parikshit is the right type of disciple because he puts forward questions vital to the interest of all men, particularly for the dying men. The question put forward by Maharaja Parikshit is the basic principle of the complete thesis of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. ❧

— Purport to *Bhāg.* 1.19.37

NOT WANTING TO HEAR CRITICISM

*A Remembrance of
His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

I remember sitting in his room, and if a guest came in and started speaking badly about some

other devotee, Prabhupadaji would just start chanting "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna". He did not want to hear any devotee being offended. (Gopal Ghosh) ❧

— *Prabhupada at Radha Damodara*. Written and published by Mahanidhi Swami. Vrindavan. 1990. Page 59.

GOVINDAYA NAMAH

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*

"uḍo khai govindāya namaḥ"
Chapter 108 of Upākhyāne Upadeśa

Upākhyāne Upadeśa is a collection of short stories with explanations that were commonly used by Srila Bhakti-siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Compiled by Sri Sundarananda Prabhu, a prominent disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, it was first published in 1940.

Harakanta Chakravarti was famous in his village as a great Vaishnava. People would say, "Chakravarti Thakura never enjoys anything without first offering it to the Lord." At the *Pauṣa-saṅkrānti* festival, Harakanta bought some khoi, a type of puffed rice, from the market for his wife's lunch. By chance there was a strong wind and the khoi started blowing out of his paper bag.

Some of his acquaintances happened to be nearby. Seeing them, Chakravarti felt awkward and, chanting "govindāya namaḥ", let the rest of the khoi fly from his bag as if he were offering it to the Lord.

[next column](#) ❧



Meanwhile, seeing that he was late, Harakanta's wife became worried and sent her son to find him. Seeing his father standing in a group of people, the innocent boy told him, "Father, where is the khoi? Mother has been waiting for it for a long time." In this way, Chakravarti was put to shame as the true fact was disclosed in front of several gentlemen.

PURPORT: There are pretenders who are actually anxious for their own sense gratification but outwardly make a show of piety for the purpose of earning name and fame. The khoi was bought for self-enjoyment, but when by bad luck it could not be enjoyed properly, a show was made of offering it to the Lord. This was not genuine devotional service.

When in spite of his best efforts to protect them, a materialistic person loses his assets, in his frustrated condition he sometimes makes a show of religiosity and detachment and prays, *bhagavan, sabai tomāra, tumi rākhile rākhite pāra, mārile mārīte pāra* — "O God, everything is yours! You are the maintainer as well as the destroyer of all!" Such shows of piety by materialistic cheaters do not constitute real surrender.

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GURU AND DISCIPLE

Sri Nityananda Das'

Prema-vilāsa 11.92-112

For more about Prema-vilāsa and Nityananda Das, see Bindus number 2, 5, and 115.

*mahāprabhura ājñā ache harināma prati
jīvera rakṣāra lāgi dibena samprati*

[Lokanath Goswami to Narottam Das Thakur:] Mahaprabhu has instructed how *harināma* should be given for the protection of the living entities. (Text 93)

*kata deha bhrami jīva naradeha pāya
tāhāra rakṣāra hetu mahauśadha cāya*

After traveling through so many bodies, the *jīva* finally gets a human body, and for his protection he needs a powerful medicine. (Text 94)

*anya dehāntare jīvera pāpa tāpa roga
tāhāra khaṇḍana kare nāhi hena yoga*

There is no yoga that can cut away the sinful entanglement that the *jīva* has acquired through other bodies. (Text 95)

Nāma-tattva

THE POWER OF KRISHNA'S NAME

ŚRĪM AD BHĀGAVATAM 3.9.15

With Jiva Goswami's comments

from Bhakti-sandarbhā 152

*yasyāvatāra-guṇa-karma-vidāmbanāni
nāmāni ye 'su-vigame vivaśā gṛhṇanti
te 'naika-janma-samalarāṇ sahasaiva hitvā
samīyānty apāvṛtamṛtaṇ tam ajam prapadye*

Let me take shelter of the lotus feet of him whose incarnations, qualities and activities are mysterious imitations of worldly affairs. One who invokes his transcendental names, even unconsciously, at the time he quits this life, is certainly washed immediately of the sins of many, many births and attains him without fail.

In this verse, the words *asu-vigame api*, "even at the time of death", imply that the persons referred to in this verse spoke the holy names only at the time of death, in a physical state in which they would not have been able to speak the Lord's holy name clearly or distinctly. The word *vivaśāḥ*, "even without desire", implies that they chanted for some external reason and not out of devotion.

The reason the Lord's holy name even when chanted in such a condition has the power to destroy the sins of many, many births, etc., is also indicated in this verse in the words *avatāra-guṇa-karma-vidāmbanāni*, "these names refer to the various incarnations, qualities and pastimes of the Lord". The name "*nṛsiṁhadeva*" is an example of a word that denotes a specific incarnation of the Lord. Such names of specific incarnations are identical with those incarnations and thus are endowed with the same potency. The name "*bhakta-vatsala*" reflects the quality of the Lord as one who is affectionate to his devotees. And the name *govardhana-dhara* denotes the Lord in his specific pastime of lifting Govardhan hill. Such names that refer to the Lord's qualities and pastimes are also identical with the Lord and are thereby equally powerful. ❧

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janme janme yata pāpa tāpa pāiyā thāke
vismaraṇa jīva nāhi jāne āpanāke

Due to the sinful entanglements of many lifetimes, the forgetful living entity does not recognize his real self. (Text 96)

manuṣya-deha pāñā tāhā sakali sādhiba
nā sādhibe sei deha temati pāiba

[He thinks] “In this human form I will desire everything. If my desires are not fulfilled in this life, I will get other bodies to do so later.” (Text 97)

hena roga dūra kare kṛṣṇa bhakta-rūpe
kṛṣṇa-nāma dile hayena gurura svarūpe

This entanglement is cured by Krishna in the form of a devotee. He assumes the form of guru and gives Krishna’s names. (Text 98)

guru śiṣye kathā ei śāstrete āchaya
yei tāhā jāne sei avāśya karaya

These topics about guru and disciple are there in śāstra, and one who understands them will adopt the process. (Text 99)

tāhā nā karile śāstra haya anuvāda
te kārāṇe nahe tāre kṛṣṇera prasāda

One who does not understand the teachings of śāstra in this way will not get Krishna’s mercy. (Text 100)

kṛṣṇa-rūpe śāstradvāre karena pracāra
sad-guru yeñho vākya kariba vicāra

Krishna distributes this truth through the words of śāstra, and by studying those śāstric teachings one can understand who is a genuine guru. (Text 101)

ekavatsara dekhibena gurura ye tattva
viśvāsa kariyā mane bujhiba mahattva

For one year a disciple should faithfully imbibe the philosophical conclusions propounded by the guru and understand their significance. (Text 102)

ye kriyā kariba guru kari nirikṣaṇa
yena yogya tena sevā kari anukṣaṇa

The disciple should carefully observe the guru’s activities and serve him in suitable ways. (Text 103)

guru bujhibena śiṣyera yemata ācāra
yogyatā ayogya mane kariba vicāra

The guru will understand the nature and behavior of the disciple and thus discern the disciple’s qualifications and disqualifications. (Text 104)

harināma sādhiba guru-saṅge thāki sadā
vaiṣṇavera saṅge lobha kariba sarvathā

To acquire the holy name, a disciple should always remain close to the guru and constantly seek out the association of vaiṣṇavas. (Text 105)

jānibena śiṣya mane kari dṛḍha rati
nahile ki yāya jīvera sakala durmati

Understanding this process, a disciple must develop firm attachment to executing it faithfully. Otherwise he will never vanquish his sinful mentality. (Text 106)

hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra sādhi divāniśi
kona yuge prabhu kṛpā haya hena vāsi

He should savor the Hare Krishna mantra day and night, eagerly waiting for the time when his master will bestow mercy on him. (Text 107)

adhika utkaṇṭhā haya guru karena karuṇā
ihā se bujhite pāre kona kona janā

The spiritual master shows mercy on a disciple when he sees that the disciple is extremely anxious for it. Very few people understand this. (Text 108)

śiṣya mana bujhi guru viśvāsera kathā
yogyatā nahile kṛpā nahibe sarvathā

As per his determination of the heart of the disciple, the guru instructs accordingly. If the disciple is not qualified then mercy will not manifest. (Text 109)

ei haya prācīna vākya śuna narottama
nā janme kṛṣṇera kṛpā eita kārāṇa

O Narottam! Please listen to this ancient wisdom. It is for this reason that Krishna’s mercy does not arise. (Text 110)

bahu śiṣya karite gosāiñra ājñā nāhiñ
ihāte viśuddha āche śuna mana dei

A goswami is not permitted to make many disciples. Hear this important truth carefully. (Text 111)

dui cāri śiṣya kaile dhare prema phala
bahu śiṣya kaile saba haya ta viphala

If one has two or four disciples he can obtain the fruit of love of God. If one accepts many disciples all his endeavors go in vain. (Text 112) ❧

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SHELTER OF RAMA

Rev. A. G. Atkins

Part four of a six-part series

For more about Reverend Atkins, see Bindu 116.

Rama said, "Those who give up a refugee,
thinking

"That shelt'ring him may bring them harm,
"Are despicable sinners; the very sight of them
"Itself is a cause for alarm.

"Slaughter of many Brahmans might be his
offence,

"But if one seeks protection, I can't drive him
hence;

"Right away, when before me a trusting soul
stands,

"I destroy sins of countless births, with their
demands;

"Downright wicked men by this one sign we
may know,

"No desire for my worship and praise do
they show;

"If a soul should to such sinful folly succumb,
"He will never before me in willingness come;

"To bring one to me a pure heart is the warrant;
"Deception and falsehood to me are abhorrent.

"But even tho' Ravan has sent him for spying,



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National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

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श्री कृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

"No harm need we fear; in his hands we're
not lying;

"All demons there are in the world — the
whole lot

"In an instant can Lakshman kill here on the spot;

"But perhaps he seeks shelter because of
some fear;

"As my own soul I'll guard him then, keeping
him near.

"So whatever his purpose, bring him here
to me,"

Said the kind, gracious lord with a smile;

Angad, Hanuman and all the monkeys
went off

Shouting praises to him all the while.

Now they (eager to make up all former defect)

Led Vibhishan to Rama with highest respect.

Then the brothers, who givers of true blessings are
And a joy to all eyes — them he saw from afar;

Coming nearer, on lord Rama's beauty he
gazed,

Stood stock-still where he was, for a moment
seemed dazed;

There he saw those eyes lotus-red, saw those
long arms,

And that dark frame that frees his own from
all alarms,

He saw that broad chest and those lion-like
shoulders,

That face beyond all in its charm for beholders;

His body was trembling, tears from his eyes
poured;

But he rallied himself, and said humbly, "My
lord,

"I am brother of demon-king Ravan, ten-
headed,

"And born of the demons by gods and men
dreaded;

"To those born of darkness dear are all things foul,
"As the darkness of night-time is dear to the owl.

"I have heard of your glory — the One who
dispels

"All his suppliants' sorrow and fear,

"Giving joy in its place; so I 've come and am
pleading,

"Save me, even me, Raghubir!"



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 180 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

29 June 2008 Yoginī Ekādaśī, 11 Vāmana, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,315

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DISTURBING OTHERS

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta 3.3

The devotee should not disturb other living entities. One type of disturbance is to kill other living beings for food. Talking about others' misdeeds, criticizing others, quarreling, scolding, bearing false witness, taking advantage at others' expense, violence, theft, spending others' money, beating others, and lusting after others' wives are all actions that disturb others and should be avoided. ❧

— English translation by Sri Bhanu Swami. Vrindavan Institute for Higher Education. No date.

PREACHING THE KIRTAN OF THE LORD

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*

Please preach the *kīrtan* of the Supreme Lord, even if in doing so you have to incur debt; then in order to pay off that debt, you will have to be even more engaged in *sevā*. When your creditors put pressure on you, you will be forced to beg more for alms. Again, as the pious householders will not give you alms unless your character and conduct are pure, you will be forced to preserve a pure lifestyle with great determination and care. I will not leave one penny for you, and in that

way in the future you won't be able to indulge in laziness and you won't be able to give up your devotional lives full of *hari-kīrtan* and *hari-sevā*.

The *maṭha* is the center of *hari-kīrtan*, and *hari-kīrtan* is life and consciousness. To ensure that there is no place for laziness, bad conduct, trivial thought, gossip, or vulgar desire in the *maṭha*, you have to go from door to door, where your *hari-kīrtan* will be tested by the public. When the public will think that they are the givers of alms and you are the receivers of alms — in other words, that their status is higher than yours — they will criticize you in many ways, thinking you are objects of their mercy. Perhaps some of them will also be ready to kick you out. Then, on one hand, you will be able to become *ṭṛṇād api sunīcha*, humbler than a blade of grass, and *mānada*, respectful to others, and on the other hand you will take great care to make your lives and characters pure and exemplary. Furthermore, what will be beneficial for you is this: as you will correct the mistakes of the common people by citing the message of *sādhū*, *śāstra*, and *guru-varga*, you will not make those same mistakes.

Please do not be upset if someone criticizes you personally. But your *guru-varga*, *śāstra*, and *mahājans* are completely faultless, supremely liberated, and eternal associates of the Lord. If, due to ignorance, someone criticizes them, then you

should correct that person's mistakes by telling them the real truth. This will be very beneficial for both you and the ignorant people. If you become lazy about begging for alms from door to door to collect ingredients for *hari-kīrtan*, and if you indulge in laziness and bad habits, preferring reclusive bhajan so you can escape others' criticism, then your character will not be purified. You will not have the life of devotional practice. I will never give you any opportunity to become deceitful in the path of devotion in the privacy of your own home; I will never give you any opportunity to live in a reclusive place so that you can become undisciplined in your heart, thinking no one will come to see or hear you there. You are my dearest friends. I will never allow you to get into trouble. I will never allow you to give up the path of pleasing the senses of the Lord so that you can please the senses of the people of the world, as well as your own, because you received some temporary position or you could not tolerate some temporary criticism. ❀

— A message to disciples. Excerpted from "Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur". Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997. Page 42.

Nāma-tattva

EVEN BY NAMABHASA

*Srila Murari Gupta's
Sri Caitanya-carita Mahā-kāvya*

*nāma-mātra-vibhavana bhavābdheḥ
pāram eva para-dustarasya ca
gacchatu sa-gaṇa eva kupābdher
dhāma kiṁ punar ajasya su-sevā*

[Spoken by Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu:]
By the power of the holy name of the Lord, Ajamila and all those associated with him could surmount the insurmountable ocean of birth and death to attain the abode of the ocean of mercy, Lord Narayan. And how much more is liberation assured for one who renders favorable service to the unborn Lord? ❀

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OUR PROCESS OF SOLVING PROBLEMS

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Real education is that which makes people Krishna conscious so that they will properly utilize the resources of the earth and stop creating disturbances. It is not possible to solve problems by passing resolutions in the United Nations. One must know the actual method of solving problems.

Sukadev Goswami says that simply by pure devotional service one can solve the problems of life. Who can do this? It is not possible for an ordinary man, but for those who are *vāsudeva-parayaṇāḥ*, devoted to Lord Krishna (Vāsudev). Only those whose concern is to satisfy Krishna and who take to pure unalloyed devotional service can solve the problems of life. (*Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, the Matchless Gift*, chapter six.)

Prabhupada: Our process of solving problems is Krishna. Krishna says, *kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati* [Bg. 9.31]. So we take Krishna's shelter and our problems are solved. As it is mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*. Krishna is the reservoir of all mystic power, *yogeśvara*. So instead of endeavoring to become a yogi, the devotees' business is to take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is *yogeśvara*, the master of all mystic power. We take this as the solution for our problems. There are different methods for solving the problems, but the best method is to surrender unto Krishna. Then all problems are solved.

Shyamasundar Das: On a social scale as well?

Prabhupada: Yes. Everything. Social scale also. Just like on the political scale, the Pandavas took shelter of Krishna. (Undated philosophical discussion with Syamasundar Das about the ideas of the American philosopher John Dewey.)

[Regarding Gandhi's solving of problems, Srila Prabhupada said that Gandhi, at the end of his life, had admitted:] "I have not solved any problem. I have simply created problems." He was a sane man. He could understand. Similarly, everyone is simply creating problems and not solving anything. What has the United Nations done for the last twenty years? Simply creating problems.

Without Krishna consciousness, there is no question of solving problems. That's a fact. Any sane man, any philosopher, any scientist may come. I shall convince him. (Room conversation, 18 April 1972, Hong Kong.)

It is not only in India — all over the world. There cannot be peace unless you reform the whole social structure, and only this movement, Krishna consciousness, can do that. That's a fact, and it is being done. (Lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, 3 January 1971, Adubhai Patel's house, Surat.)

Kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva. There is no other alternative. You have to take to this purificatory process of chanting Hare Krishna. There is no other way. You cannot reform the society. That is not possible. You cannot train them in the Vedic way. Everything is lost now. (Lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, 3 January 1971, Adubhai Patel's house, Surat.)

In Kali-yuga you cannot reform the population by any other means except this *harer nāma*. Therefore we are introducing Hare Krishna movement everywhere. (Room conversation, 12 December 1970, Indore.)

ISKCON is not going to be a social reformer, but as far as possible we can help. Our main business is how to make everyone Krishna conscious. That is our business. (Morning walk conversation, 9 February 1976, Mayapur.)

If you chant the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* and give up these sinful activities, automatically you become reformed. You come to the spiritual platform. And in this way your life will become successful. (*Civilization and Transcendence*, chapter 10.)

All the leaders talk about peace, and they meet in peace conferences, but there can be no peace from conferring and passing resolutions. There cannot be peace unless the whole social structure is reformed, and that can be done only by Krishna consciousness. (*A Second Chance*, chapter 12.)

It is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy that we are reforming the whole society in a very simple way — chant Hare Krishna. It is so nice. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu recommended [Cc. ādi 17.21]:

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*



There is no other alternative. Simply chant Hare Krishna mantra. Everything will be reformed. Life will be polished and everything will be successful. This is *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam* [Cc. antya 20.12]. (Lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, 12 July 1974, Los Angeles.)

NOT PREACHING IS VIOLENCE

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Where there is really *hari-kīrtana*, there is no question of Kali at all! Where there is no *hari-kīrtana*, that is the place of Kali. And those who hesitate to go out and preach the message of Mahaprabhu are subject to committing the sin of animal killing, *prāṇi-hatyā*. They violate that regulative principle. A *vaiṣṇava* should not hesitate — he should be ready at any moment to go out and preach.

Bhaktivinode Thakur was very old. His eyelids were hanging down so he couldn't see. If he wanted to see someone he would have to hold open his eyes. At that time, at the fag end of his life, he couldn't even move. But he was saying, "I want to ride on a horse and go out and preach!" This is real life. If there is no *hari-kathā*, then life has gone out. There is only death.

Bhaktivinode Thakur has sung in his *Gītāvali* (4.4.2):

*jīva kṛṣṇa-dāsa, ei viśvāsa,
karle ta' āra duḥkha nāi*

If you can put complete faith in this statement, that the *jīva* is the eternal servant of Krishna, then there is no distress and no suffering. Then you will engage in Krishna's service day and night under the guidance of a bona fide guru. Then where is the question of the entrance of Kali? Kali means *adharma*, irreligiosity or sin. There will be no question of his entrance.

— From a lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, given on 5 April 1992, in Bhubaneswar.

KINDNESS OF RAMA

Rev. A. G. Atkins

Part five of a six-part series

For more about Reverend Atkins, see Bindu 116. Meeting Lord Rama for the first time, Vibhishan has just offered prayers:

As these words he uttered, he bowed lowly to him;

But Rama rose quickly, great joy surging thro' him;



Those humble words pleased Rama; now as
he faced him,
He put his strong arms round this friend and
embraced him.

With Lakshman he seated Vibhishan then
near him,
And spoke words to scatter his fears and to
cheer him:

“Can all, Lanka’s prince, with your fam’ly
be well,
“When you live in a place that is one living
hell?

“Day and night, friend I know, you with evil
ones live;
“There how can you its due place to true
worship give?

“I know all about your devout ways and
spirit;
“All evil you hate, but you’re keen in all
merit.”

Vibhishan said, “God will not put me, I
trust,
“With such rascals; ‘twere better in hell to
be thrust;

“But now, lord Raghuraya, since your feet I see,



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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“And you own me as friend, all is thriving
with me.

“Not a soul can find happiness, no heart find rest
“Anywhere — No! Not even dream fashion,
“Till worshipping at Rama’s feet, it forsakes
“That one source of all grief, selfish passion.

“Until, bow and shaft bearing, his quiver
bound fast,
“In the heart Raghunath rightful place find
at last,

“In that heart till then all kinds of evil
abide,
“Envy, greediness, foolishness, passion and
pride.

“Like the first moon-less nights is conceit’s
gloomy murk,
“In which envy and lust like great owls love
to lurk;

“They will keep their sure place in the soul
till the hour
“When, like morning’s bright sun, Lord, you
rise in your pow’r.

“I’ve seen now your lotus-feet; nothing else
mattered;
“I am well indeed; all my fears have been
scattered;

“Whomever in kindness you look upon,
such
“A one none of this world’s greatest torments
can touch;

“I’m a demon, by nature corrupt and
undone;
“I have never a worthy thing practised, not
one;

“Yet he whose form the saints in deep thought
cannot trace,
“Here has welcomed e’en me in his happy
embrace

“By the kindness of Rama, the treas’ry of
bliss,
“Without limit my blessing has been;
“For the one whose feet Brahma and Siva
both worship

“At last with my own eyes I’ve seen.”



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 181 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

14 July 2008 Śayana Ekādaśī 26 Vāmana, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,325

Highlights

- **NO USE FOR TWINKLING STARS**
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
- **MOST UNFORTUNATE**
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada
- **THE FORM OF GOVINDA**
Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur
- **NAMA-TATTVA: DIFFERENT LEVELS OF VAISHNAVAS**
Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode
- **RAMA'S LOVE FOR HIS DEVOTEES**
Rev. A. G. Atkins

NO USE FOR TWINKLING STARS

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



Of course it is difficult when young men and young women intermingle. But the Krishna consciousness movement is meant to reform everything. Such desires should be checked, and that is only possible if one is strictly Krishna conscious. The more *Kali-yuga* advances, the more people will suffer in so many ways. The only solace, only solution, is Krishna consciousness. If she becomes Krishna conscious then she doesn't require a husband. She will know that "Krishna is my protector. Why shall I artificially seek after father or husband?" And what few days of protection will either the father or the son or the husband be able to give? Real protection is Krishna. This other protection is temporary. It's only required because we have this material body.

This kind of hypocrisy — taking *sannyāsa* and then mixing with woman — is not to be allowed. If someone wants a woman

then they should get married and live respectfully. We have no objection. But this hypocrisy should be stopped. So many have fallen down. I have got a very bad experience. Henceforth we are not going to create new *sannyāsīs*. And those who have fallen down, let them marry and live like respectable gentlemen. After all, a young man falling down — that's all right. It is nature's way. But they should marry that girl. I am insisting on this from the very beginning — no friendly liaison. If you want, get a wife and live like a gentleman. The same goes for the women. They should fastidiously live with one husband and children. What is the wrong there? We have so many *gr̥hastha* devotees. There is no prohibition against marriage. But what is this nonsense of taking *sannyāsa* and then making relations with women? This should be completely stopped.

In the campuses of our temples only those who are actually eager to advance in Krishna consciousness should live. Nobody else. We give free food, free apartment, cloth, and everything. "Come here. Live. As far as possible we shall provide." But this is specially meant for *bhagavad-bhajana*.

Attend *ārati*, rise early in the morning, attend the functions, and take *prasādam*. Everything should be organized in this way — not loosely. This whole campus should be for devotees. We don't want tenants. It should be developed for the purpose of cultivating Krishna consciousness. Either here or outside India this principle should be followed. We don't want a hodgepodge society. Let it be very pure. *ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca tārā* — “One moon is sufficient. There is no need of millions of stars.” [Chanakya Pandit] In this way, if we can make one person really Krishna conscious, then our mission is successful. What is the use of millions of twinkling stars? ❧

— Room Conversation. 7 January 1977. Bombay.

MOST UNFORTUNATE

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*

If *varṇāśrama* and other fruitive activities enjoined in the *śāstras* become prominent in one's life, then one cannot become *akiñcana*, or fully dependent on the Lord. Rather, these activities provoke offenses against the chanting of the holy names in the form of conceptions of “I” and “mine.” If a person who is fully surrendered to Krishna becomes proud of following *varṇāśrama* principles, then it must be considered that he has become most unfortunate. ❧

— From *Brāhmaṇa and Vaiṣṇava*. English translation by Bhumipati Das. Vrajaraj Press. Vrindavan. 1999. Page 114

THE FORM OF GOVINDA

*Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur's
Bhakti-ratnākara 6.461-468*

The following song describes the beauty of the deity of Govinda in Vrindavan and was composed by Srila Srinivas Acharya. It recounts Srimati Radharani's words to one of her *gopī* companions.

(*Suha-rāga*)

*vadana-cānda kun kundāre kundila go,
ke nā kundila du'ti āñkhi*

*dekhite dekhite mora parāṇa yemana kare go,
sei se parāṇa tā'ra sākṣī*

What sculptor created the moon of Govinda's face? Who sculpted Govinda's two eyes? Only my life-breath witnesses what my life-breath feels as I gaze on Govinda.

*ratana kāṭiyā kebā yatana kariyā go,
ke nā gaḍhāiyā dila kāṇe
manera sahite mora e pāñca parāṇe go,
yogī haila uhāri dhiyāne*

Nāma-tattva

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF VAISHNAVAS

*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode's
Śrī Harināma-cintāmaṇi 2.8-10*

Vaiṣṇava-lakṣaṇa Qualities of a Vaishnava

*eka nāma yāra mukhe vaiṣṇava se haya
tāre gṛhī yatna kari mānibe niścaya*

A *vaiṣṇava* is one who just once says the holy name. A householder should carefully honor him.

Vaiṣṇavatara-lakṣaṇa Qualities of a More Exalted Vaishnava

*nirantara yāra mukhe śuni kṛṣṇa-nāma
sei se vaiṣṇavatara sarva-guṇa-dhāma*

Anyone from whose mouth one always hears the holy name of Lord Krishna is a more exalted *vaiṣṇava*. He is the abode of all good qualities.

Vaiṣṇavatama-lakṣaṇa Qualities of the Most Exalted Vaishnava

*vaiṣṇava uttama sei yāhāre dekhile
kṛṣṇa-nāma āse mukhe kṛṣṇa-bhakti mile*

A most exalted *vaiṣṇava* is one whom, simply by seeing, one feels devotion to Lord Krishna and finds Lord Krishna's holy name in one's mouth.

[In Bhaktivinode Thakur's footnotes to these verses he refers the reader to Cc. madhya 15.104, 15.106, 16.72, and 16.74, wherein Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu instructs the people of Kulina Gram, regarding different levels of *vaiṣṇavas*.] ❧

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Who created those jewel earrings? Who placed them on those ears? Now my mind and five life-airers have become yogis. They are rapt in meditation on Govinda.

*nāsika-upare śobhe e gaja-mukutā go,
sonāya maṇḍita tā'ra pāśe
bijurī-jarita kibā cāndera kalikā go,
meghera āḍāle thāki' hāse*

On Govinda's nose is a pearl ornament studded with gold, an ornament like a crescent moon and lightning smiling from behind a cloud.

*sundara kapāle śohe sundara tilaka go,
tāhe śobhe alakāra pāṇṭi
hiyāra mājhāre mora jhalamala kare go,
cānde yena bhramarāra pāṇṭi*

Beautiful *tilaka* gleams on Govinda's beautiful forehead with its glistening locks of black hair. In my heart Govinda's forehead shines like a moon and a swarm of black bees.

*madana-phāṇḍuyānā cūḍāra tālani go,
uhā nā śikhiyāchila kothā
e buka bhariyā mukha dekhite nā pānu go,
e baḍi marame mora vyathā*

From where did Govinda's face learn how to become Kamadeva's trap? As I gaze at Govinda's face and chest, my heart becomes agitated.

*kemana madhura se nā bola-khāni khāni go,
hātera upare lāgi pāṇa
temana kariyā yadi vidhātā gaḍhita go,
bhāṅgiyā bhāṅgiyā tāhā khāna*

How sweet is the sound of Govinda's voice! Cupping my hands, I sip the nectar of that sound. If the creator Brahma allows, again and again I will taste the ambrosia of that sound.

*kari-bara-kara jini' bāhura balanī go,
hīngule maṇḍita tāra āge
yauvana-vanera pākhī piyāse maraye go,
tāhāri paraśa-rasa māge*

Decorated with red *hīngula*, his powerful arms defeat the elephant's trunk. This bud in a newly blossoming forest is dying of thirst. This bird prays to taste the nectar of Govinda's touch.

*ṭhamaki thamaki yāya teraca nayane cāya,
yenamata gaja-rāja mātā
śrīnivāsa-dāsa kaya o-rūpa lakhila naya,
rūpa-sindhu gaḍhila vidhātā*

Gracefully, gracefully Govinda walks, casting crooked glances from his eyes like an intoxicated elephant. Srinivas says: I have seen Govinda in this way. The demigod Brahma has no power to create the ocean of handsomeness that is Sri Govinda. ❧

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RAMA'S LOVE FOR HIS DEVOTEES

Rev. A. G. Atkins

Part six of a six-part series

*For more about Reverend Atkins, see Bindu 116.
Lord Rama replies to Vibhishan's prayers:*

"Listen friend," Rama said, "of my nature I'll tell,

"Things which all divine and saintly ones know full well;

"Even tho' he's the hated foe of all creation,
"If one in fear come to me seeking salvation,

"And freedom from lust, pride and falsehood's foul taint,

"I will instantly make him as pure as a saint.

"All personal ties are weak threads which I gather —

"His wife, children, brothers, his mother and father,

"His fam'ly and friends, body, riches and home,

"All a thick rope to bind him to me then become.

"Since he has no wants, all things the same response find

"In him; fear, joy, or sorrow ne'er trouble his mind;

"The place of such saints in my heart is as riches,

"For which till it has them the greedy heart itches;

“All saints like you I to my heart in love take;

“I am here in this body for naught but their sake.

“Dear to me as my own soul are all those devoted

“And firm in true righteousness’ law,

“Who their greatest good find worshipping the incarnate,

“And hold Brahmans in loving awe.

“Prince of Lanka, I know all these virtues are yours,

“That is why you now share in my love’s richest stores.”

Hearing these words of Rama, the monkey host raised

Their glad voices, “The Kindly Lord ever be praised.”

Prince Vibhishan drank in the things Rama thus voiced,

Nectar-like; craving more as in them he rejoiced;

As those lotus-feet to himself often he strained,



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

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National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

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Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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In his heart all his love could not well be contained:

“My master, lord of all things still and ongoing,

“The friend of the faithful, their inmost heart knowing,

“The hope I once cherished at heart has now vanished

“By stream-like love for your dear feet it is banished;

“Grant me too the thing which gives Shiva unending

“Delight—love for you, with pure faithfulness blending.”

The lord strong and valiant said, “So shall it be.”

Then he asked that some water be brought from the sea.

“Altho’ you say, friend, you no longer desire it,

“Rich fruit comes from seeing me; life’s laws require it.”

Then Rama the sign of true kingship traced on him,

As heaven in showers its blooms rained upon him. ❀

— Pages 1020-1022. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987.

THIEF OF HEARTS

Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan’s

Śrī Aiśvarya-kādambinī

*kiṅkiṇī-valaya-nūpura-dhārī niṣka-kunḍala-varāṅgada-hārī
pīta-cīna-vasanaḥ sa-ḍimbhaḥ śiṅjitair api manāṁsi jahāra*

Dressed in yellow silk and decorated with bracelets, anklets, necklaces, splendid armlets, and golden earrings, child Krishna stole everyone’s heart with the tinkling sounds he made as he walked. [6.8] ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 182 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

29 July 2008 Śrī Kāmikā Ekādaśī, 11 Śrīdhara, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,331

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Adapted from Mahābhārata

NO IMPEDIMENTS

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



Krishna says *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṇ namaskuru* — "Always think of me, become my devotee, worship me and offer obeisances unto me." [Bg. 18.65]. He does not say any big, bombastic thing.

It's very simple. It doesn't require an M.A. or Ph.D. education to learn these four things. Anyone, even a child, can do it. It is very easy. If you daily see the deity in the temple, or if you have got a deity at home, even a child will become habituated to think of Krishna. It is not at all difficult. And if you chant the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, that is also thinking of Krishna.

If you continue this then you can become his devotee. Is it very expensive? No. *patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati*, you can offer Krishna a little water or a *tulasī* leaf [Bg. 9.26]. Or if *tulasī* leaf is not available, any leaf will do. He does not say it must be a *tulasī* leaf. So what is the difficulty to secure a little water, a leaf, or a small flower? The real thing is bhakti. Even if you are the poorest of the poor you can become a devotee. If you want to become a devotee of Krishna, there is no impediment in all the three worlds. You can become a devotee; it is so easy. If you want to be a rich man it requires so much trouble. So long as you do not desire to become rich, then you are peaceful.

And as soon as you desire to become a rich man, it will be all activities how to acquire money this way or that way. Everyone tries to become a rich man because they think that in my old age I'll have some income and I shall peacefully relax. You are already sitting down peacefully. Why take another means? ❀

— From a lecture in Bombay, 20 December 1975.

"OFFER OBEISANCES TO HER"

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Srila Gour Kishore Das Babaji Maharaja had a follower whose name was Shambhu Babu. He later accepted a wife and married. Then he came to see Gour Kishore Das Babaji Maharaja, and offered his obeisances. Seeing him, one of the devotees said, "Maharaja, Shambhu Babu has come and he is now married".

"O, *bhālo helā, bhālo helā!*" Gour Kishore Das Babaji said. "It is very good that Shambhu Babu is married now". Then he gave an instruction to him. "Shambhu, you should understand that your wife is Krishna's maidservant. She will give pleasure to the senses of Krishna, not to your senses." You should see her as Krishna's maidservant, a *vaiṣṇavī*, and that she is meant to give pleasure to the senses of Krishna. So every day you should offer obeisances to her and take her remnants because she is a *vaiṣṇavī*."

This is the system for *vaiṣṇava* family. Early in the morning, both the husband and wife will get up and offer each other obeisances:

*vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

We have a similar system in our process of *vaiṣṇava* marriage. When the ceremony is finished then the husband and wife accept *prasāda* together for the first time. They sit together and they will take remnants of each other. The husband takes the remnants of the wife, and the wife takes the remnants of husband. This is our marriage system. There is no question of giving pleasure or enjoyment to one's own senses — everything is meant for Krishna's pleasure and enjoyment. That is very good. That is Krishna's *sambandha*, Krishna's family. Husband and wife relationship should be based on a relationship with Krishna, not on a temporary bodily relationship. Then there will be all happiness, all *ānanda*, blissfulness. Otherwise, material relationships mean unlimited suffering, distress, frictions, quarrelling and divorce. Someone divorces their husband and marries another man. A man divorces his wife and marries another woman. What is this? Like dogs and hogs! How can you expect happiness, peacefulness, and bliss? ❧

— From a lecture in Bristol, England. 11 August 1994.

THE DEATH OF GAUTAMI'S SON OR "WHO IS REALLY TO BLAME?"

*Adapted from Mahābhārata
Anuśāsana-parva, chapter one*

*Here, Bhishma responds to a question from
Yudhisthir Maharaja.*

Since you are dependent on God, destiny, and time, why do you consider yourself to be the cause of your actions? There is an ancient story in this connection about a conversation between Mrityu (personified death), Kala (personified time), the sagacious lady Gautami, a hunter, and a snake.

There was once an old lady named Gautami, who possessed great patience and tranquility of mind. One day she found her son dead, having been bitten by a snake. An angry hunter named Arjunaka bound the serpent with a rope and brought it before her. He said to her, "O blessed lady, this wicked snake has killed your son. Tell me quickly how this wretch is to be destroyed. Shall I throw it into the fire or shall I hack it to pieces? This infamous destroyer of a child does not deserve to live any longer."

"Gautami replied, 'O Arjunaka of little understanding, release the snake. It does not deserve death at your hands. Who is so foolish as to disregard the inevitable fate that awaits him, and, burdening himself with folly, sink into sin? Those who have made themselves light by the practice of virtuous deeds manage to cross the sea of this world just as a ship crosses the ocean. But those who have made themselves heavy with sin sink to the bottom, like an arrow thrown into the water. By killing this serpent, my boy will not be restored to life, nor do I see that any other positive end will be attained by its death. Whereas, by letting it live, no harm will be caused to you.'

The hunter then said, "I know that great persons are afflicted by the sufferings of all creatures. But these words which you have spoken are meant only for a self-controlled person, not for one who is plunged in sorrow. Therefore, I must kill this snake. Those who value peace of mind consider time to be the cause of everything, but practical men quickly soothe their grief by revenge.

Gautami replied:

*na caivārtir vidyate 'smadvidhānām
dharmārāmaḥ satatam sajjano hi
nityāyasto bāla-jano na cāsti
dharma hy eṣa prābhavāmy asya nāham*

"People like us are never pained. Good men are always intent on virtue. The death of the boy was predestined. Therefore, I am unable to approve of the destruction of this snake. (1.19)

*na brāhmaṇānām kopo 'sti kutaḥ kopāc ca yātanā
mārdavāt kṣamyatām sādho mucyatām eṣa pannagaḥ*

Nāma-tattva

THE LION'S ROAR *Garuḍa Purāṇa, 1.232.12*

*avaśenāpi yan-nāmni kīrtite sarva-pātakaiḥ
pumān vimucyate sadyaḥ sinha-trastair mṛgair iva*

The ominous roar of a lion sends the deer scampering helter-skelter for their lives. Similarly, *harināma* instantaneously disperses and extirpates all sins when chanted once, even unwittingly. ❧

— Quoted in Bhaktivinode Thakur's *Jaiva Dharma* chapter 23. Translated by Sri Sarvabhavana Das. Published by Brhat Mrdanga Press. Vrindavan. 2003.

“Brahmins do not harbor resentment because resentment leads to pain. O good man, out of compassion, forgive this serpent and release it.” (1.20)

The hunter replied, “Let us acquire great and inexhaustible merit in the next world by destroying this creature, just as a man gains great merit and confers it upon his victim by sacrificing it on the altar! Merit is won by killing an enemy; by killing this despicable creature, you will acquire great and true merit in this world.”

Gautami replied:

*kārthaprāptir gṛhya śatruṃ nihatya
kā vā śāntiḥ prāpya śatruṃ na mukto
kasmāt saumyā bhūjage na kṣameyaṃ
mokṣaṃ vā kiṃ kāraṇaṃ nāśya kuryām*

“What good is there in torturing and destroying an enemy, and what good is acquired by not setting free an enemy that is in our power? O you with a kind face, therefore, why should we not forgive this serpent and try to acquire merit by setting it free?” (1.22)

The hunter replied, “Instead of this single creature being protected, a great number of others should be safeguarded against this one. Virtuous men leave the vicious. You should therefore destroy this wicked reptile.”

The hunter repeatedly urged Gautami to destroy the snake, but Gautami, not blaming the serpent for the death of her son, continued to dissuade him, and did not bend her mind to killing it.

At that time, the snake, which was painfully bound up with the rope, sighed a little, and then slowly spoke in a human voice, “O foolish Arjunaka, what fault is there of mine? I have no will of my own, nor am I independent. Mrityu, death, sent me on this errand. It was by his direction that I have bitten this child, and not out of any anger or choice on my part. I was not an independent cause in the child’s death, just as the officiating priests at a sacrifice don’t acquire the merit of the act of offering oblations of clarified butter to the fire [rather, it goes to the person who has arranged for the ceremony]. Therefore, if there is any sin in this, it is Mrityu’s.”

Mrityu then appeared there and said, “O serpent, I sent you on this errand guided by Kala, time. Neither you nor I are the cause of this child’s death. The modes of nature, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *taṃas*, are all evoked by Kala. All creatures, mobile or immobile, in heaven or earth, as well as all acts and all abstentions in this world, are influenced by time. O snake, the whole universe is under the influence of Kala. Knowing this, why do you consider me to be guilty? Neither of us are

free agents. Dependent on Kala, we are ordained to do our appointed work.”

Then Kala arrived at that scene of dispute and said, “Neither Mrityu, nor this serpent, nor I, O hunter, are guilty of the death of any creature. We are merely the immediate causes of events. O Arjunaka, it was the karma of this child that formed the cause of our action in this matter. There was no other cause by which this child came to its death. It was killed as a result of its own past karma.

“We are all subject to the influence of our respective karma. Karma is an aid to salvation, just as sons are, and karma is also an indicator of virtue and vice in man. As men make whatever they wish from a lump of clay, similarly they attain various results because of their karma. Therefore, neither you, nor I, nor Mrityu, nor the serpent, nor this old brahmin lady, were the cause of this child’s death. He himself was the cause.”

Hearing Kala’s words, Gautami said to Arjunaka, “This child has met with death as the result of its own karma. I too acted in the past in such a way that as its consequence my son has died. Let Kala and Mrityu depart from this place, and you, O Arjunaka, should release this serpent.”

Kala, Mrityu and the serpent then all went to their respective destinations and both Gautami and the hunter became consoled in mind.

Bhishmadev then said, “O Yudhisthir, give up your grief and attain peace of mind. Men attain heaven or hell as the result of their own karma. This war was neither your creation nor Duryodhan’s. All of the kings slain in this war have died as a result of the action of time.” Having heard all this, the powerful and virtuous Yudhisthir became peaceful.

* * *

Mature seekers of the absolute tolerate and accept whatever sufferings come as the fruit of their own past misdeeds. They don’t try to avoid the lessons of life by cheaply blaming other living entities, or even time or death personified. Such acceptance is a fundamentally important step in spiritual life. Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to *Gītā* 12.13-14:

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.8) it is stated: *ta te ‘nukampāṃ su-samīkṣamāṇo bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtāṃ vipākam*. Whenever a devotee is in distress or has fallen into difficulty, he thinks that it is the Lord’s mercy upon him. He thinks, “Thanks to my past misdeeds I should suffer far, far greater than I am suffering now. So it is by the mercy of

the Supreme Lord that I am not getting all the punishment I am due. I am just getting a little, by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” Therefore he is always calm, quiet and patient, despite many distressful conditions. A devotee is also always kind to everyone, even to his enemy.

This point is nicely illustrated in the seventeenth chapter of the first canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. Therein it is described that Maharaja Parikshit came across Dharma in the form of a bull being tortured by Kali personified. Kali had broken three of Dharma’s legs and was beating him, but when Parikshit asked Dharma who the perpetrator of the crime was, Dharma refused to blame Kali and stated that it was difficult to ascertain who was the real cause of his suffering. His wise comments deeply impressed Maharaja Parikshit, who then told Dharma:

*dharmam bravīṣi dharmajña dharmo ‘si vṛṣa-rūpa-dhṛk
yad adharma-kṛtaḥ sthānam sūcakasyāpi tad bhavet*

“O you who are in the form of a bull! You know the truth of religion, and you are speaking according to the principle that the destination intended for the perpetrator of irreligious acts is also intended for one who identifies the perpetrator. You are none other than the personality of religion.” (*Bhāg.* 1.17.22)



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Srila Prabhupada comments in his purport:

A devotee’s conclusion is that no one is directly responsible for being a benefactor or mischief-monger without the sanction of the Lord; therefore he does not consider anyone to be directly responsible for such action. But in both the cases he takes it for granted that either benefit or loss is God-sent, and thus it is his grace. In case of benefit, no one will deny that it is God-sent, but in case of loss or reverses one becomes doubtful about how the Lord could be so unkind to his devotee as to put him in great difficulty. Jesus Christ was seemingly put into such great difficulty, being crucified by the ignorant, but he was never angry at the mischief-mongers. That is the way of accepting a thing, either favorable or unfavorable. Thus, for a devotee, the identifier is equally a sinner, like the mischief-monger. By God’s grace, the devotee tolerates all reverses.

Tolerance is an essential qualification for spiritual life. Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur writes in his purport to *Bhāgavatam* 11.23.5:

“Often those who give up the materialistic path and devote themselves to renunciation are attacked by impious persons. This analysis, however, is superficial, since the punishment is actually the cumulative result of one’s past karma. Some renunciants show lack of tolerance when presented with the remnants of their previous sins, and thus are forced to enter again onto the path of impious life.”

A devotee who is serious about making advancement thus doesn’t try to blame others, but rather tolerates adverse situations as being mercifully sent by the Lord for instruction. Those who refuse to accept the reactions of their misdeeds and try to blame their suffering on others only attain more misery for their critical words and lack of tolerance. [See also *Critics Take the Karma* in Bindu 92.] — Md

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 183

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

12 August 2008

Śrī Pavitrārōpaṇī Ekādaśī, 25 Śrīdhara, 522 Gaurābha

Circulation, 2,339

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SEEKING KRISHNA'S PROTECTION

His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



On this advent day of Krishna we shall seek protection at the lotus feet of Krishna. Then we will be able to cross over this ocean of illusory energy.

*samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ padaṁ
padaṁ paraṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ [SB 10.14.58]*

We should read how Krishna protects the demigods or the devotees. We should seek Krishna's protection. This world is so dangerous. It is said, *paraṁ paraṁ yad vipadāṁ* — at every step there is danger. But, *samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ* — if we take shelter of the lotus feet of Murari, under whose lotus feet the whole *mahat-tattva*, cosmic manifestation, is resting, then we can very easily cross this big ocean of birth and death. "*Vatsa-padam*" means an impression made by the hoof of a calf and the water contained in it. The vast ocean becomes like a small spot created by the impression of a calf's hoof.

The Krishna consciousness movement is for this purpose. We are requesting and training the bewildered living entities that have forgotten Krishna to revive their Krishna consciousness so that they may be saved from the onslaught of material nature. This

Krishna consciousness movement is the greatest welfare work for human society. Take it very seriously and be happy. ❀

— Lecture on *Janmāṣṭamī*, Vrindavan, 11 August 1974.

ORIGIN OF THE FESTIVAL OF JANMASTAMI

Adapted from

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 15.248-265

In the *uttara-khaṇḍa* of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Yudhisthir Maharaja asked Krishna, "O infallible Lord, please describe to me in great detail the observance of *Janmāṣṭamī*. When did this observance commence? What are the benefits of following it and what are the rules for its conduct?"

Krishna replied, "O Yudhisthir, when the wrestling match was over, Devaki entered into the arena. At that time the members of the Kukura and Andhaka dynasties all surrounded her and began to praise her and Vasudev. She then placed me on her lap, and with great affection she began to cry, saying, 'My dear son! My dear son!' With tears in his eyes and a choked voice that was filled with humility, Vasudeva came, embraced Balaram and me, and said, 'Today my life has become successful and glorious because I have been able to see my two sons, the glories of the Yadu dynasty!'

"O king, seeing my parents' happiness, everyone else became happy. Bowing before me, they all said, 'Today we are happy. Today Krishna is born. Today the demon Kamsa has been killed in this wrestling arena. O Madhusudan, Krishna, be

pleased with us and kindly remove all the doubts within our mind.’ They continued:

*yasmin dine prasūyeta devakī toām janārdana
tad-dinaṁ dehi vaikuṇṭha kurmas te tatra cotsavam
samyag-bhakti-prapannānām prasādaṁ kuru keśava*

“O Krishna, O Lord who removes all sufferings, please tell us the day when Devaki gave birth to you. We will celebrate a festival in your honor. O Krishna, please be kind to your surrendered devotees.’ (Text 257)

“Vasudev was astonished to hear their words. He joyfully looked at Balaram, and with the hairs of his body erect in ecstasy, he said, ‘Let the desire of the people be fulfilled. Please tell them what they want to know.’

“O son of Pritha, then, on my father’s order, I revealed the observance of *Janmāṣṭamī* to the people of Mathura, as follows:

*paurāś ca taj-janma-dinaṁ varṣe garbhāṣṭame gate
punar janmāṣṭamīm lokāḥ kurvantu brāhmaṇādayaḥ
kṣatriyā vaiśya-jātīyāḥ śūdrā ye ‘nye ‘pi dharmiṇaḥ*

“The *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, *śūdras*, and all others who are pious, from the age of eight years and older, should observe *Janmāṣṭamī*. (Text 261) [Sri Sanatan Goswami comments: The same is true for observing *ekādaśī*. In *sāstra* it is said: *aṣṭa-varṣādihiko bālaḥ* — “Children eight years and older should also observe *ekādaśī*.”]

*simha-rāśi-gate sūrye gagane jaladāgame
māsi bhādra-pade ‘ṣṭamyām kṛṣṇa-pakṣe ‘rdha-rātrake*

*śaśāṅke vṛṣa-rāśi-sṭhe prājāpatyarkṣa-saṁyute
vasudevena devakyām ahaṁ jāto janāḥ svayam*

“During the monsoon season, on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of the month of *Bhādra*, when the sun had entered Leo, and when the moon was in Taurus conjoined with the star *Rohiṇī*, at the halfway point of the night, I was born as the son of Vasudev and Devaki. (Texts 262 to 263)

*evam etat samākhyātaṁ loke janmāṣṭamī-vratam
bhagavatyaś ca tatraiva kurudhvaṁ su-mahotsavam
mathurāyām tataḥ paścāl loke khyātim gamiṣyati*

“This observance will be known in this world as *janmāṣṭamī-vrata*. On this day, celebrate a great festival honoring the goddess Devaki also. You can begin this festival in Mathura, and soon it will spread all over the world.’ (Text 264) [Sri Sanatan Goswami comments that the word “*bhagavatyaḥ*” (goddess) here may refer to both Devaki and goddess Durga.]

*ity ākarṇya yathākhyātaṁ tathā lokair anuṣṭhitam
śāntir astu sukhaṁ cāstu lokāḥ santu nirāmayāḥ. iti*

“After hearing these words, everyone began to observe as they were instructed. As a result, there was peace, happiness, and good fortune everywhere.” (Text 265) ❧

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THE FIRST SIX SONS OF DEVAKI

*Adapted from Hari-vamśa Purāṇa
Viṣṇu-parva 2.9-30*

*Vaishampayana Muni tells Maharaja Janamejaya
about the previous birth of the first six sons of Devaki.*

After Kamsa was informed that the eighth son of Devaki would be the cause of his death, Kamsa became very frightened and started making various arrangements to destroy any future babies that Devaki might give birth to. His endeavors for his protection caused great disturbances for the people of the world. When Lord Vishnu heard about Kamsa’s activities, he contemplated, “Kamsa will surely kill the first seven newborn babies of Devaki. I think that I should appear in this world as her eighth son,”

While contemplating in this way, the Lord’s attention was suddenly drawn to Patala-loka, where the demons named Sad-garbha formerly

Nāma-tattva

CONQUERING THE UNCONQUERABLE

*Viṣṇu-dharma Purāṇa quoted in
Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.449*

*jitaṁ tena jitaṁ tena jitaṁ teneti niścitaṁ
jihvāgre vartate yasya harir ity akṣara-dvayam*

[Prahlaḍ Maharaja proclaims:] “He is conquered! He is conquered! He is conquered! Krishna is certainly conquered by one who keeps the two syllables of the name Hari on his tongue.” ❧

— Translated by Sri Kusakratha Das. Krishna Library. Culver City, California. 1992.

resided. These demons were very powerful and possessed strength equal to that of the demigods who drink nectar. They were sons of Kalanemi and displayed immense prowess during battle.

Long ago, following in the footsteps of their grandfather Hiranyakasipu, these demons worshiped Brahma, the grandfather of all living entities. They underwent severe austerities, and as a result their hair became matted. Being pleased by their penance, Brahma appeared before them and awarded them a benediction.

Brahma said, “You all are great heroes who have appeared in the family of demons. I am very pleased by your austerities. Each of you may ask for a benediction and I will grant it.”

The intention of all six demons was similar. They prayed, “O respected lord, if you are pleased with us then kindly grant us this benediction. Let us be incapable of being destroyed by demigods and serpents. May we never become influenced by the curses of great sages. O lord, if you are actually satisfied with us then kindly insure that we may never be killed by Yaksas, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Caranas, or human beings.”

Brahma replied with a smiling face, “Whatever you have asked for will be granted.”

After granting this boon to the Sad-garbhas, self-born Brahma returned to his own abode. Meanwhile, Hiranayakasipu became annoyed when he heard about this incident. In an angry mood, he told his grandsons, the Sad-garbhas, “Why have you approached Brahma for benedictions instead of me? By doing so, you have lost my affection. From now on you are like my enemies and I reject you. When you next appear in the womb of your mother, you will be killed by your father, one by one. You are famous as great demons and well known as the Sad-garbhas. All of you will be born from the womb of Devaki. In that birth your father Kalanemi, who will be known as Kamsa, will kill you, one by one.”

As soon as Lord Vishnu remembered those demons, He immediately went to Patala-loka where they were undergoing austerities while remaining within water. There, Lord Vishnu saw all six demons fast asleep, by the influence of Nidra-devi, within the deep water at Patala-loka. Vishnu entered their bodies, forcibly took away their souls, and handed them to Nidra-devi, the predominating deity of sleep.

Lord Vishnu, who is always fixed in the truth, then said to Nidra-devi, “By my order, take these spirit souls to the house of Devaki. They are fearful demons known as the sad-garbhas. You must implant them, one by one, in the womb of Devaki. When these demons are born and then killed by Kamsa, they will go to the abode of Yamaraja. Only then will Kamsa’s endeavors become useless and Devaki’s hard labor bear fruit. From that time onwards you will also become very famous, by my mercy, being respected and worshiped by all in this world.” ❀

— The Hari-vaṁśa Purāṇa. Sanskrit with English translation by Bhumipati Das. Rasbihari Lal & Sons. Vrindavan. 2006.

THE FESTIVAL AT NANDA’S HOME

Srila Narahari Chakravarti

Bhakti-ratnākara 13.358-365

(Kāmoda-rāga)

rāṇī yaśomatī kahe nanda prati
kṛṣṇa-jaṇma-tithi ithe
kari’ nimantraṇa āna bandhu-gaṇa
e sādha upaje cite

Queen Yasoda said to Nanda, “Today is Krishna’s birthday. We should invite all our friends and kinsmen. This desire has come to my heart.”

śuni’ nanda-ghoṣa ha-iyā santoṣa
upananda sute āni’
vṛṣabhānu-ghare pāṭhāyena tāre
kahiyā binaya-bāṇī

Hearing these words, Nanda-gopa became happy. Speaking sweet words, he sent Upananda’s son to Maharaja Vrishabhānu’s home. [Rupa Goswami says in his *Radha-kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, 1.39-40, that Upananda had two sons, named Kandava and Dandava.]

śuni’ sei kṣaṇe bhānura bhavane
kailā nimantraṇa giyā
vṛṣabhānu-gaṇa sahita gamana
kare nānā-dravya laiṇā

Hearing Nanda’s words, Upananda’s son at once went to Vrishabhānu’s palace and gave them the invitation. Accompanied by his associates, and bearing many gifts, Vrishabhānu went to Nanda’s home.

ānande kṛttikā rāṇī premādhikā
rādhikā la-iyā sāthe
yaśomatī pāṣe yāite ullāse
yaśodā mililā pathe

As Queen Kirtida with Radha, overflowing with affection, joyfully went to see Yasoda, Yasoda met them on the way.

kata nā ādare laiyā gelā ghare
āśane vasā'lā rāñī
vṛṣabhānu nande mililā ānande
ha-ila maṅgala-dhvani

Yasoda Rani took them into the palace and gave them glorious seats. Vrishabhanu and Nanda also met with great happiness and spoke auspicious words.

varaja-nagare prati ghare ghare
raṭaye utsava-kathā
gopī-gaṇa nehe cale nanda-gehe
gāyī māṅgala-gāthā

There was talk of the great festival in all the homes of Vraja. Singing auspicious songs, the *gopīs* affectionately went to Nanda's house.

nānā ābharaṇa pari' gopa-gaṇa
haraṣe sarasa hiyā
haridrā-sahita dadhi dugdha gṛta
ḍāle nandālaye giyā

Decorating themselves with a variety of ornaments, and bearing gifts of yogurt, milk, ghee, and turmeric, with joyful hearts the cowherd people went to Nanda's palace.

nandādika saṅge sabe nāce raṅge
vividha taraṅga tāya

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Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

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श्री कृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

bāje yantra-gaṇa ghanaśyāma ghana
nanda-mahotsava gāya

Musical instruments played. Nanda, his family, and his guests all joyfully danced. Many great waves of bliss flooded the celebration. Thus Ghanashyam Das [a name of Narahari Chakravarti Thakur] sings of the great festival in Nanda's home. ❀

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PRAYERS TO THE LOVER OF THE GOPIS Sri Rupa Goswami's Stava-māla 82.6

kānanārabdha-kākalī-śabda
pāṭavākṛṣṭa gopikā-dṛṣṭa
cāturī-juṣṭa-rādhikā-tuṣṭa
kāminī-lakṣa-mohane dakṣa
bhāvinī-pakṣa mām amuṁ rakṣa

O Lord who attracts the *gopīs* to the forest with the sweet sound of your flute, who is very pleased by intelligent Radha, who is expert at delighting thousands of beautiful girls, and who is the lover of a great multitude of affectionate *gopīs*, please protect me!

ajarjara-pativratā-hṛdaya-vajra-bhedoddhurāḥ
kaṭhora-vara-varṇinī-nikara-māna-varma-cchidaḥ
anaṅga-dhanur-uddhata-pracala-cilli-cāpa-cyutāḥ
kriyāsur aghavid viṣas tava mudarī kaṭākṣeṣavaḥ

May the arrows of Lord Krishna's sidelong glances, which are shot from moving eyebrow-bows more proud than the bow of the god of love, which pierce the hard armor of the pride of the most virtuous girls, and which become thunderbolts breaking the hearts of the most chaste young girls, bring transcendental happiness to you. ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 184

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

27 August 2008

Śrī Annadā Ekādaśī, 11 Hṛṣīkeśa, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,355

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RADHARANI'S ANXIETY

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Even in Vrindavan there is anxiety. Radharani is in anxiety that "Krishna is not here. How will Krishna come?" The *gopīs* are also in anxiety, so much so that when Krishna used to go to the forest for tending the cows and the *gopīs* remained at home, they were said to be thinking, "Krishna's feet are so soft that we hesitate to take them on our breasts, but he is now walking in the forest where there are so many stones and pricks giving pain to his lotus feet." Thinking like this, they fainted. This is also anxiety. So much anxiety that they faint — but that is for Krishna. Therefore the *gopīs* are exalted. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu recommends, *ramyā kācid upāsanā vraja-vadhū-vargeṇa yā kalpitā* — "There is no better type of worship of Krishna than was done by the *gopīs*." [Srinath Chakravarti's *Caitanya-matta-ma-ñjuṣā* commentary on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*] So there is spiritual anxiety and material anxiety. Spiritual anxiety means you are advancing in spiritual life. Material anxiety means you are going downhill. ❧

— From a lecture in Hawaii on 7 February 1975.

BEST OF ALL PLACES

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta

Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

As the surrendered maidservants of Sri Radha, we have to constantly live on the banks of Radha Kund. In the Narayan conception there is no existence of father and mother. Narayan is unborn. But when that unborn Lord appears as the son of Devaki and Vasudev in Mathura, he performs the pastime of taking birth. The Lord of Vaikuntha is unborn. But since that unborn Lord, due to his inconceivable potency, manifested his pastime of taking birth, his position as the Supreme Lord becomes more glorious. Therefore Mathura is superior to Vaikuntha.

Lord Krishna appears in the pure mind of a practitioner. That pure mind is also Mathura. Many people consider Mathura a mythical place, a place described in fairy tales. Doing so denies Krishna's inconceivable potency. By his inconceivable potency, Mathura appears along with Krishna in this material world.

Vrindavan, where Krishna enjoyed the *rāsa-līlā*, is superior to Mathura, where Krishna took birth. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (ādi 1.17) states:

*śrīman rāsa-rasārambhi vaṁśīvaṭa-taṭa-sthitaḥ
karṣaṇa veṇu-svanair gopīr gopī-nāthaḥ śrīye 'stu naḥ*

Sri Srila Gopinath, who originated the transcendental mellow of the *rāsa* dance, stands on the shore in Vamshivat and attracts the attention of the cowherd damsels with the sound of his celebrated flute. May they all confer upon us their benedictions.

From his birth in Mathura, Krishna enjoys his pastimes as an immature boy. In the *rāsa-līlā* arena he is a mature boy.

Once, Krishna was enjoying *rāsa-līlā* pastimes with his different types of *gopī* friends. When Sri Radha arrived and saw that the special characteristics of her service could not be exhibited in a *rāsa-līlā* that included so many types of *gopīs*, she left the arena and went to Govardhan. Chandravali also arrived there. When Sri Radha saw Sri Krishna sitting inside a cave at Govardhan with Chandravali, she became very upset. After tactfully deceiving Chandravali's messenger Saibya, Radha's *gopī* friends, Tulasi, Dhanishtha, and others sent Chandravali to Sakhisthali. That is why Srila Das Goswami Prabhupada, who was a staunch follower of Sri Rupa, offered his obeisances to Sakhisthali from a distance. After deceiving Chandravali, Sri Radha's followers brought Shyamasundar to Radha Kund.

Sri Govardhan, where Sri Radha-Krishna's most confidential amorous pastimes take place, is superior to Vrindavan. In his prayer to Sri Govardhan, Srila Raghunātha Das Goswami wrote (*Stavāvali, Govardhanāśraya-daśakam* 6):

*yasyām mādhaba-nāviko rasavatīm ādhāya rādhām-tare
madhye cañcala-keli-pāta-valanāt trāsaiḥ stuvatyās tataḥ
svābhīṣṭhaṁ paṇam ādadhe vahati sā yasmin mano-jāhnavī
kastarī tan nava-dampatī-pratibhuvam govardhanam nāśrayet*

Who will not take shelter of Govardhan Hill, the abode of the youthful couple, where Madhava became a boatman and took sweetly beautiful Radha on his boat to the middle of Manasi Ganga? Then, when Radha became frightened by the turbulent waves stirred by a great storm, she prayed to Krishna to calm the water. After which Madhava took his desired fee from her.

Radha Kund is superior to Govardhan because it is flooded fully with the nectar-een love of Sri Krishna. Sri Rupa-manjari, who understood Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's confidential intention, instructed that service to Radha Kund, the highest object of

Sri Gaurahari's internal mood, is the ultimate goal of all service. Sri Radha Kund is totally incomprehensible and unattainable for followers of the Nimbarka Sampradaya, by the followers of any *sampradāya* under Chandravali's guidance, and by the so-called followers of *mādhurya-rasa* who are devoid of devotion to Gaura. Therefore Sri-la Das Goswami wrote in his prayer to Sri Radha Kund (*Stavāvalī, Rādhā-kunḍāṣṭakam*, text 2):

*vraja-bhuvi mura-śatroḥ preyaśinām nikāmair
asulabham api tūrṇam prema-kalpa-drumam tam
janayati hr̥di bhūmau snātur uccair priyam yat
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kunḍam evāśrayo me*

May very dear and fragrant Radha Kund, which, for one who bathes in it, immediately creates in the land of the heart a desire tree of pure love rare even among the *gopī* beloveds of Krishna in Vraja, be my shelter.

In his tenth verse in *Upādeśāmṛta*, Sri Rupa Goswami has ascertained who among the devotees is the best:

*karmibhyaḥ parito hareḥ priyatayā vyaktim yayur jñāninas
tebhyo jñāna-vimukta-bhakti-paramāḥ premaika-niṣṭhās tataḥ
tebhyas tāḥ paśu-pāla-panikaja-dṛśas tābhyo 'pi sā rādhikā
presthā tadvad iyaṁ tadīya-sarasī tām nāśrayet kaḥ kṛtī*

In the *śāstra* it is said that of all types of fruitive workers, he who is advanced in knowledge of the higher values of life is favored by the Supreme Lord Hari. Out of many such *jñānīs*, persons who are advanced in knowledge, one who is practically liberated by virtue of his knowledge may take to devotional service. He is superior to the others. However, one who has actually attained *prema*, pure love of Krishna, is superior to him. The *gopīs* are exalted above all the advanced devotees because they are always totally dependent upon Sri Krishna, the transcendental cowherd boy. Among the *gopīs*, Srimati Radharani is the most dear to Krishna. Her *kunḍa*, lake, is as profoundly dear to Lord Krishna as this most beloved of the *gopīs*. Who, then, will not reside at Radha Kund, and in a spiritual body surcharged with ecstatic devotional feelings, *aprākṛta-bhāva*, render loving service to the divine couple Sri Sri Radha-Govinda, who perform their *aṣṭa-kāliya-līlā*, their eternal eight-fold daily pastimes? Indeed, those who execute devotional service on the banks of Radha Kund are the most fortunate people in the universe.

Only the most fortunate pure-hearted souls live in the most sanctified place, Sri Radha Kund, and worship Krishna twenty-four hours

a day. Sri Radha Kund is the topmost section of Goloka, the most confidential place in the spiritual sky, and the only shelter for devotees on the platform of *mādhurya-rasa*. Planets like Bhu, Bhuvah, and Svah are meant for ambitious householders. Above them are planets like Mahar, Jana, Tapa, and Satya, which are meant for the celibates. *Upakurvaṇa-brahmacārīs* live in Maharlok, *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārīs* attain Janalok, *vānaprasthas* attain Tapalok, and *san-nyāsīs* enjoy in Satyalok. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.16) confirms:

*ā-brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino 'rjuna
mām upetya tu kaunteya punar janma na vidyate*

From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to my abode, O son of Kunti, never takes birth again.

The ecstatic spiritual abode of Vaikuntha is rarely attained even by liberated souls. The Lord's devotees who are free from material desire at once attain that abode after leaving their material bodies. Mathura is superior to Vaikuntha; Vrindavan, the abode of the *rāsa-līlā*, is superior to Mathura; Govardhan is superior to Vrindavan; and Radha Kund is the best of all. ❀

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MAD FOR RADHA

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Krishna is controlled by Radharani's love. Jayadev Goswami has written that Krishna says, *dehi pada pallavam udāram* — "O Radhe! I am asking you, please give me your lotus feet!" [*Gīta-govinda* 10.8] And, *govindānandinī rādāḥ, govinda-sarvasva* — Srimati Radharani is giving pleasure to Govinda; Govinda is everything for her. [*Cc. ādi* 4.82] Krishna completely belongs to Radha — he has turned mad for Radha. He is acting like a madman.

When Radharani is taking a bath upstream, Krishna takes bath downstream because all the scent, flowers, and *kumkum* will come floating down and touch his body. Krishna has become

mad for Srimati Radhika. At night he hides himself behind a berry tree in the courtyard of her house. He is afraid of Radharani's mother-in-law and sister-in-law. He is hiding because they will chastise him, "Where is that Krishna?! Wicked, very naughty fellow!" He is a madman.

To get the association of Radharani or to touch her body, sometimes Krishna disguises himself as a washerman's wife and goes to Radhika's house, "Radharani, please give me your clothes. I will wash them." At other times he disguises himself as the wife of a barber, *nāpitunī*. The wife of the barber goes and puts some red substance, *altā* on the feet of the ladies. So Krishna assumes that form and goes to Radharani, "Please come, Radhe. I'll put *altā* on your feet."

Being so mad for Srimati Radharani, Krishna assumes the mood and complexion of Radha and comes as Gauranga Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu then cries just as Radharani is crying for Krishna: *kva kṣṇa nanda-kula-candramāḥ* — "Where is that Krishna, the son of Nanda Maharaja?" *kva kṣṇa mandra-muralī-ravaḥ* — "Where is that Krishna who plays so sweetly with his flute?" [*Cc. antya* 19.35] *kāhāṇī karoṇī kāhāṇī pāṇī vrajendra-nandana*, "Where can I go? Where shall I find that Vrajendranandan, the son of Nanda Maharaja?" [*Cc. madhya* 2.15] Mahaprabhu is saying like that. He is Krishna himself, but because he has assumed the mood and complexion of Srimati Radharani, he thinks of himself as Radharani. Radharani is greater than Krishna, so Krishna has assumed her mood and complexion. *Brahmavādīs* or *māyāvādīs* want to become the Supreme Lord, or they want to become one with him. They are ignorant fools. Why are you trying to become the Supreme Lord? Why are you trying to become one with him? Become his *bhakta*, his devotee! The devotee is superior! A devotee is greater than Krishna. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [*ādi* 6.100] says, *kṣṇera samatā haite baḍa bhakta-pada* [*Cc. ādi* 6.100]. If you become his dear devotee, a very intimate devotee of Krishna, Krishna will make you greater than him. So why are you trying to become one with him, you nonsense? You become a *bhakta*!

I say that this claim of Krishna is not true: *mattah parataraṇī nānyat kiñcid asti dhanañjaya* —

"O Dhananjaya, there is no one superior to me." [Bg. 7.7] No. This is not true. Krishna's *bhakta* can bind him. Mother Yasoda binds Krishna, and the cowherd boy Sridam climbs up on his shoulder. How is this? This is *bhakta-vātsalya* — how dear his *bhakta* is to Krishna! Krishna has said [Bhāg. 11.14.15],

*na tathā me priyatama ātma-yonir na śaṅkaraḥ
na ca śaṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr naivātmā ca yathā bhavān*

"O Uddhava, you are so dear to me. *Ātma-yonir*, Brahma, is not so dear; Shankar, Lord Shiva, is not so dear; Lakshmi Devi, the goddess of fortune, she is not so dear; Balaram is not so dear; I myself, my own soul, is not so dear to me as you are dear to me." You see? Then who is greater? The *bhakta*! *kṛṣṇa sāmāya haite haya baḍa bhakta-pada*. Become a *bhakta* and Krishna will make you greater than him! Why are you trying to become one with him, you nonsense?

Therefore I say, this is not true! Krishna is cheating: *mattaḥ parataram nānyat kiñcid asti dhananjaya* — "O Dhananjaya, there is no one superior to me." Cheating! "No, no, no. There is someone superior to you. Your *bhakta* is superior." So become his *bhakta*. This is Krishna. ❧

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar, 12 October 1989.



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RADHA'S WONDERFUL DANCING

Srila Narahari Chakravarti

Bhakti-ratnākara 5.3350-3353

(*Kedāra-rāga*)

*nṛtyati rādhā dhṛti'-bhara-bhañjinī gaja-gāminī
maṅgalamaya hīna malina komala kālindī-pulina
dhani dhani dhani nirmala bara sarasa pulina yāminī*

Radha dances. Her graceful steps are like the gait of an elephant. Her movements break Krishna's peaceful composure to pieces. All glories! All glories! All glories to the place of Radharani's dancing, the auspicious, pure soft sands on the bank of the Yamuna that are sweet like nectar.

*bājata mṛdutarā mṛdaṅga dhigi dhigi dhigi taga dhilaṅga,
dhā ḍṛgu ḍṛgu jhendrām ḍṛmi, ḍṛmi ḍṛmi ḍṛmi ḍṛāminī
jhuṇu jhuṇu paga nūpura-dhṛāni, kiṅkiṇī kaṭi jhini nini nini
jhaṅkṛta kara balaya jhanana, jhanana ati-rāminī*

The *mṛdaṅgas* sweetly declare: "*Dhigi dhigi dhigi taga dhilaṅga, dhā ḍṛgu ḍṛgu jhendrām ḍṛmi, ḍṛmi ḍṛmi ḍṛmi ḍṛāminī*." The anklets say: "*Jhuṇu jhuṇu paga*." The belt of bells affirms: "*Jhini nini nini*." While the bracelets say: "*Jhanana jhanana*."

*praphullita mukha kañja basana, daśanāvali lalita hasana
nigadata taka thai, thai, thai taka sukha-dhāminī
su-lalita mañi-bhūṣaṇa gaṇa gīma dhūnata kautuka ghana,
lola locanāñcala bharu, alaka kula lalāminī*

Her face is like a blossoming lotus. She smiles playfully; her teeth are splendid. Her delightful jangling jewel ornaments say: "*taka thai thai thai taka*." She is filled with bliss. Her neck sways to and fro and she casts restless sidelong glances. Her locks of hair and her eyebrows are graceful. She is decorated with glorious ornaments.

*cāmikara garava haraṇa, parama madhura madhurima-tana
ābrta basanāñcala cala, jhalakata anupāminī
hastaka bahu-bhīti karata, śobhā-rasa-puñja jharata
narahari bahu nichani nirakhi, lajjita sura-kāminī*

She robs gold's pride. She is most sweet. She moves the edge of her garment. She is glorious without peer. With a gesture of her hand she removes all fear. From her comes a flood of nectarean beauty. Gazing at her, the demigod-desses become embarrassed at their own lack. Narahari Das earnestly worships her. ❧

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 185

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

11 August 2008

Śrī Pārśva Ekādaśī, 26 Hṛṣikeśa, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation 2,361

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VOTING AND VAISHNAVISM

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



The mass of people, especially in this age of Kali, are all born *śūdras*, basically lowborn, ill-trained, unfortunate and badly associated. They themselves do not know the highest perfectional aim of life. Therefore,

votes cast by them actually have no value, and thus persons elected by such irresponsible votes cannot be responsible representatives like Maharaja Yudhisthir. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 1.9.49)

At the present moment, the world is inclined toward the democratic process, but the people in general are all contaminated by the modes of passion and ignorance. Consequently they cannot select the right person to head the government. The president is selected by the votes of ignorant *śūdras*; therefore another *śūdra* is elected and immediately the entire government becomes polluted. If people strictly followed the principles of *Bhagavad-gītā* they would elect a person who is the Lord's devotee. Then automatically there would be good government. Rishabhadev therefore recommended Bharat Maharaja as the emperor of this planet. Serving a devotee means serving the Supreme Lord, for a devotee always represents the Lord. When a devotee is in charge,

the government is always congenial and beneficial for everyone. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 5.5.20)

Because of the importance of the Krishna consciousness movement, people should be Krishna conscious and should not vote for anyone who is not Krishna conscious. Then there will be actual peace and prosperity in the state. When a *vaiṣṇava* sees mismanagement in the government, he feels great compassion in his heart and tries his best to purify the situation by spreading the Hare Krishna movement. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 6.2.3)

We don't very much like this so-called democracy. What is the value of this democracy? All fools and rascals. They vote for another fool and rascal and he becomes prime minister, or this or that. That is not good for the people. We are not for this so-called democracy because they are not trained. (Lecture in London, 24 July 1973)

The first teaching of *Bhagavad-gītā* should be taken by the persons who are going to be elected in the government service. The public should be aware of this. If somebody comes to canvass for votes, you should first inquire, "Have you have read *Bhagavad-gītā*? Mahatma Gandhi read *Bhagavad-gītā*. Why shouldn't you? Do you know what is *Bhagavad-gītā*? If so, then I will give you my vote. Otherwise, get out." ... It is a great necessity that government men must study *Bhagavad-gītā*. Otherwise, don't give them vote. (Lecture in Bombay, 22 March 1974)

Devotee: Some of our devotees should run for office.

Prabhupada: No. If you can make the people Krishna conscious, then everything will come automatically. If they vote for a Krishna conscious person to be president and prime minister, then everything will be saved. So that means you have to create Krishna conscious voters. Then everything will be right. That should be one of the aims of the Krishna consciousness movement. The government is still under the control of the public. If the public becomes Krishna conscious then naturally the government will be Krishna conscious. But that is up to the public. (Lecture in Bombay, 6 November 1970)

If people are properly trained up, then they will vote for nice men and there will be nice government. Now, because the people are not trained, they are practically asses. What is the meaning of the votes of asses? If the majority are asses, then one ass will be elected. That's all. So when the executive head is an ass what benefit can he do for the people? (Room Conversation in Indore, 12 December 1970)

Educate the people. "Don't vote for the rascals. Just try to understand who is the real man, who is the real leader. (Morning walk conversation in Los Angeles, 11 December 1973)

The defect of the modern civilization is *vox populi*. People may be asses, but still their votes are accepted. (Room Conversation with Dr. Copeland, Professor of Modern Indian History, in Melbourne, 20 May 1975)

Interviewer: Do you think most of the Hare Krishna members will participate in the election in November? Do you think they will register and vote?

Prabhupada: Personally I never give votes.

Interviewer: Will they follow your example and not vote?

Prabhupada: I do not know, but our principle is that I vote for this man or that man if there is some spiritual benefit. That is our point. (Interview with the religion editor of the Associated Press in New York, 16 July 1976)

I have never given vote. Since we have got this *sva-rāj*, Indian independence, as soon as the vote question comes up, I go away. I think, "Why shall I give this nonsense person my vote? None of them are liked by me." So I avoid it. I don't believe in it. (Room Conversation in Bombay, 8 January 1977) ❀

THE PROSTITUTE IN THE HEART

Raghunath Das Goswami's

Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā, text 7

*pratiṣṭhāśā dhr̥ṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī me hr̥di naṭet
katham sādhuḥ-premā spr̥ṣati śucir etan nanu manaḥ
sadā tvaṁ sevasva prabhu-dayita-sāmantam atulaṁ
yathā tām niṣkāśya tvaritam iha tām veśayati saḥ*

O mind! How can the pure devotion to Sri Krishna ever appear in my heart as long as the shameless, low-born, dog-eating prostitute of the desire for prestige is flagrantly dancing there? Therefore, always remember and serve the incomparable generals in Sri Krishna's beloved army of unalloyed devotees. They will at once drive out this prostitute and initiate the flow of immaculate *vraja-prema* in my heart."

Excerpt from the Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa commentary of Thakur Bhaktivinode: This verse indicates how one can extinguish any remaining doubt he may have if his repeated and exhaustive attempts to weed out deceit from his heart have failed. Hankering for honor is in fact a shameless prostitute who yearns to be worshipped. All other unwanted desires may be eradicated, but the hankering for honor and distinction is extremely difficult to uproot. It is like a seed which sprouts only later into a deceitful plant, a matrix from

Nāma-tattva

CHANTING GRANTS FAR MORE THAN LIBERATION *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.225

*mama nāma-sadāgrāhī mama sevā-priyaḥ sadā
bhaktis tasmai pradātavyā na tu muktiḥ kadācana*

[In the *Ādi Purāṇa* the Lord says:] "I give *bhakti* to the person who is always engaged in chanting my name and serving me as the goal in his life. I never simply give such a person only liberation."

Commentary by Jiva Goswami: *Sevā-priyaḥ* means to take one's service to the Lord as one's goal in life. In this context, *mukti* means "liberation devoid of *bhakti* (*sāyujya-mukti*)". ❀

— Translation by Sri Bhanu Svami. Sri Vaikunta Enterprises.
Chennai. 2006.

which all the other *anarthas* stem. Thus it is called shameless, for it conveniently overlooks its own evil influence. Fame is like a dog, and one who runs after it is factually eating the flesh of a dog; thus the desire for material honor and distinction is compared to a low class prostitute who consumes dog meat. ❧

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QUESTIONABLE COLLECTION TACTICS AND SHOWS OF DEVOTION From the life of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

At the Cuttack *maṭha* there was one *sannyāsī* whose methods of collecting were not very pleasing to Saraswati Thakur. Sometimes this *sannyāsī* would tell people that the *maṭha* had thousands and thousands of *brahmacārīs*, that they also ran a leper colony which had one thousand lepers, that they ran a students' hostel, and that they fed the poor. All of this was, of course, untrue, and Saraswati Thakur did not approve.

On one occasion, the same *sannyāsī* went to the market and collected many things from Marwaris (a wealthy business community in India). He told one such businessman, "We have three hundred *brahmacārīs*, so give three hundred vests," which he got. Being very elated, and thinking that Saraswati Thakur would be pleased, when he arrived at the gate of the *maṭha*, he started calling out in a loud voice, to attract everyone's attention, "Jaya! Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaja ki jaya! However, Srila Saraswati Thakur was so upset that he fasted that whole day.

On another occasion the same devotee arranged for many *grhasthas* from the Midnapur district to take *hari-nāma* initiation. However, Saraswati Thakur said they were disciples of that *sannyāsī* and not his. "He is trying to have many people take *hari-nāma* from me, but actually they are his disciples. I don't need so many so-called disciples. He is bringing so many insincere people for show only," he said.

This same *sannyāsī* once went to the income tax officer and said, "Please help us to collect from the Marwaris," knowing that the Marwaris

were generally wealthy. The idea was that if the income tax officer went with him, they might be intimidated into giving good donations. However, the income tax officer refused, saying, "This is not proper." The *sannyāsī* then said, "Well at least let me take your car, now that I've come, so I can get back to the *maṭha*." The income tax officer granted this, but the *sannyāsī* went back to the *maṭha* via the bazaar, and, without the income tax officer's knowing, started collecting donations from the Marwaris. Seeing the income tax officer's car, they felt there was some kind of threat, and so they gave profusely, including money, *dhotis*, and so many other things. Then he returned to the *maṭha*. When Saraswati Thakur heard how he had made this collection he became angry like fire and arranged to have everything returned. He used to say, "*karilām sannyāsī hoy, gelo vilāsi* — I made them *sannyāsīs* but they've all become sense enjoyers." Of course, not all the *sannyāsīs* were like this. Some were and some weren't. ❧

— From an unpublished biography on Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati by Sri Srimad Bhakti Vikas Swami Maharaja.

GRADATIONS OF KRISHNA'S QUEENS Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhupada's Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī 3.7-12

*tās tu śrī-yadu-vīrasya sahasrāṇyasya ṣoḍaśa
aṣṭottara-śatāgrāṇi dvāravatyām suvīśrutāḥ*

*āsām sakhyaś ca dāsyāś ca pratyekaṁ syuḥ sahasraśaḥ
tulya-rūpa-guṇāḥ sakhyaḥ kiñcin nyūnās tu dāsikāḥ*

*tatrāpi rukmiṇī satyā jāmbavaty arka-nandinī
śaibyā bhadra ca kausalyā mādṛīty aṣṭau gaṇāgrīmāḥ*

*tatrāpi rukmiṇī-satyē varīyasyau prakīrtite
aiśvaryād rukmiṇī tatra satyā saubhāgyato varā*

It is very well known that Lord Krishna, the hero of the Yadu dynasty, had 16,108 wives at Dwarka. Each queen had thousands of girl friends and maidservants. The friends were equal to the queens in beauty and personal qualities, but the maidservants were a little inferior. Of all these queens, Rukmini, Satyabhama, Jambavati, Kalindi, Saibya, Bhadra, Kausalya, and Madri were the eight most qualified. Out of them, Rukmini and Satyabhama are said to be the best. Rukmini is exalted because of her transcendental opulence, and Satyabhama is exalted because of her extreme good fortune.

*kuṭumbasyeśvarī yāsīd rukmiṇī bhīṣmakātmajā
satyabhāmottamā strīṇām saubhāgye cādhikābhavat*

[It is said in the *Hari-vaiṣṇa Purāṇa*:] Rukmini, the daughter of King Bhishmaka, had the greatest opulence in Lord Krishna's palace, but Satyabhama was the most fortunate of Lord Krishna's wives.

*na me tvattatḥ priyatamā kācid devi nitambinī
ṣoḍaśa-strī-sahasrāṇām priye prāṇa-samā hy asi*

[Krishna says to Rukmini in the *Kārttika-māhātmya* of the *Padma Purāṇa* (6.88.28):] My queen, of all my 16,000 wives none is more dear to me than you. You are as dear to me as my own life-breath. ❀

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ODE TO MY WICKED HEART

Srila Govinda Das

For more about the poet Govinda Das, see the preface to the article “Krishna, the Sannyasi Beggar” in Bindu number 25.

(Pāhiḍā-rāga)

*śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya balarāma nityānanda
pāriṣada saṅge avatāra
golokera prema-dhana sabāre yāciñā dila
nā la-inu muñi durācāra*



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Accompanied by their associates, Krishna and Balaram descended to this world as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. They begged everyone to accept the great treasure of love they had brought from Goloka. However, I acted very badly and refused to accept it!

*āre pāmara mana marame rahala baḍa leśa
saṅkīrtana prema-bādale saba hiyā ḍubala
mohe vidhi vañcita kela*

(Refrain) O my wicked heart! A great javelin is now pushed into my chest! The chanting of the holy names has brought a great monsoon of ecstatic love. Every heart except mine has been plunged into that monsoon! Destiny has cheated me!

*śrī guru vaiṣṇava pada kalpa-taru-chāyā pāñā
saba jīva tāpa pāśarila
muñi abhāgiyā viṣa- viṣaye mātiyā ra-inu
hena yuge nistāra nā haila*

Resting in the shade of the wish-fulfilling tree of the feet of Sri Guru and the *vaiṣṇavas*, every soul has forgotten his burning sufferings. But not I! I am very unfortunate! I drank poison and have become like a madman! Even after a *yuga* I will not be delivered!

*āgune puḍiyā maroṇ jale paraveśa karoṇ
viṣa khāñā maroṇ mo pāpiyā
ei mata kari yadi maraṇa nā kare vidhi
prāṇa rahe ki sukha lāgiyā*

I will throw myself into a fire! I will throw myself in the ocean! This sinner will drink poison and die. If in spite of all my efforts destiny does not allow me to die, then how can I be content to go on living and breathing?

*ehena gaurāṅga-guṇa nā karinu śravaṇa
hāya hāya kari hā hutāśa
hare-kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra mukha bhari nā la-ilāma
jīvan-mṛta govinda-dāsa*

I do not listen to the descriptions of Lord Gaurāṅga's glories. Alas! Alas! I burn in the flames of a fire! The Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* does not fill my mouth! Govinda Das has become a walking corpse! ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 186 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

25 September 2008

Śrī Indirā Ekādaśī, 10 Padmanābha, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation, 2,372

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ENTERING KRISHNA'S FAMILY *His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*



Krishna in Vrindavan is surrounded by many associates. He has got his father, Nanda Maharaja, and his mother, Yashoda. He has got so many friends, hundreds and thousands of them — boyfriends and girlfriends. The trees, the plants, the flowers, the fruits, the land, the water, the cows, and calves. He is never alone. If we say, "The president is coming." "The president" means he is not coming by himself; he is coming with his ministers, secretaries, some soldiers and bodyguards, and so many other people. He will not come alone. If an insignificant material president is always surrounded by his associates, you can just imagine how the Supreme Being is. He can never be alone. That is Krishna. Krishna is not zero — that is *śūnyaavāda*: "Everything is zero after this." Nor is Krishna undifferentiated — that would be *nirviśeṣavāda*: "Everything is like the sky." No. He is an individual, a person. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.12], Krishna says, "My dear Arjuna, you are a person. I am also a person. And all these soldiers and kings who are assembled here, they are also persons. Don't think that we were not persons in the past, that we are not persons at present, and that in the future we shall not be persons. We are all individual

persons, eternally." And whenever there is a person there are associates, there is family, there is exchange of love.

This Krishna consciousness movement means to become trained up sufficiently how to enter Krishna's great family. The material world means we are running after a false family. But don't think that there is no real family life. There is real family. That is Krishna's real family, the eternal family, blissful family. So this Krishna consciousness movement means to train up people to be detached from this false family and to enter into the real family. ❧

— Arrival lecture in Dallas, 3 March 1975.

WHEN BHAJAN BECOMES BHOJAN *Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

Unless one possesses unalloyed devotion he cannot have the good fortune to receive initiation or teachings on devotional service from a spiritual master. If a person is careless, then after obtaining mantras and the process for worshiping the Lord through aural reception, such mantras and rituals become the source of material attachment. Those who give up duplicity and properly hear the topics of Hari from a bona fide spiritual master, and those whose ears are able to properly receive such topics, only they are able to repeat the same words. The very same mercy and teachings that *tridaṇḍī*

prabhu Sri Prabodhananda received from Sriman Mahaprabhu were preserved by him in verses for the benefit of future devotees. Those who have a taste for the mood of Prabodhananda are worthy of being called *vaiṣṇavas*. Otherwise, one simply wanders about searching for insignificant eatables like banana stalks, *dāl* balls, and drumsticks. ❀

— *Brāhmaṇa and Vaiṣṇava*. English translation by Bhumiapati Das. Vrajara Press. Vrindavan. 1999. p. 71.

FINDING A GURU

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee: Why have some devotees gotten gurus who later fell down?

Gour Govinda Swami: They were not so eager. Krishna as *paramātmā* in the heart knows what is inside. Those persons who got such gurus, they were not so serious. They were thinking, “I want a guru, and this person has been branded, stamped, as guru. I’ll accept.”

Nāma-tattva

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY NAMES

*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode’s
Jaiva Dharma, chapter 23*

With folded hands, Vijaya Kumar said, “Benign Gurudeva, by your mercy everything is auspicious for us. Please guide us in understanding the profound significance of *nāma-tattva*.”

The face of Raghunath Das Babaji immediately lit up with joy and he began to speak: “There are two categories of *harināma*: *mukhya* and *gauṇa*. Those names of Krishna that refer to his activities in relationship with the material nature are *gauṇa-nāma*, secondary names. For example, *ṣṣṭi-kartā*, “creator”; *jagat-pāla*, “the universal preserver”; *viśva-niyantā*, “the universal administrator”; *viśva-pālaka*, “the universal maintainer”; *paramātmā*, “the Supersoul”, and so on. The word *brahman*, although a name of Krishna not referring to him in relationship with the modes of material nature, is also a *gauṇa* name. Though there are immense benefits from chanting these *gauṇa* names of Sri Krishna, they rarely bring forth transcendental results.

“On the other hand, the names of the Supreme Lord associated with his transcendental spiritual abode are eternal and have nothing to do with the mundane plane. These names are absolute, spiritual, and are known as *mukhya-nāma*, principal names. Examples are Narayan, Vasudev, Janardan, Hrishikesh, Hari, Achyuta, Govinda, Gopal, Rama, and so on. The *mukhya-nāma* are of the spiritual sky and are non-different from the Supreme Lord himself. The most fortunate

souls in this universe attract the attention of *mukhya-nāma* with the purity of their *bhakti*, and *mukhya-nāma* dances upon their tongues in pristine glory.

“The *mukhya-nāma* have no connection with this phenomenal plane and are endowed with the complete *śakti* of Sri Bhagavan. They descend to this mundane illusory sphere to annihilate *māyā*. Therefore, the conditioned souls of this material world have no better friend and well-wisher than *harināma*....

Vijaya: “Which is the sweetest amongst the principal names?”

Raghunath Das Babaji: “The *Śata-nāma-stotra* states:

*viṣṇor-ekaikāraṇī nāmāpi sarva-vedādīkārī matam
tādyk-nāma-sahasreṇa rāma-nāma-samarī smṛtam*

“One name of Sri Vishnu is superior to all the Vedic mantras, and one name of Sri Rama is more potent than a thousand names of Sri Vishnu.”

“Then, the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* states:

*sahasra-nāmnām puṇyānām trīr āvṛtīyā tu yat phalam
ekāvṛtīyā tu kṛṣṇasya nāmaikam tat prayacchati*

“When the thousand transcendental names of Sri Vishnu are chanted three times they are equivalent to chanting one name of Krishna.”

“Thus, we see that ‘Krishna’ is the supreme name. Therefore, we should always follow the instruction of Sri Gauranga and chant the *mahā-mantra*:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare.* ❀

— Translation by Sarvabhavana Das. © Bhaktivedanta Book Trust 2003. Bhaktivedanta Vedabase. 2003.

But they were not so curious, so eager to know whether this person has Krishna cent per cent or not; whether he can deliver me cent per cent Krishna or not." Krishna knows all these things and he made such an arrangement.

Devotee: A lot of devotees are preaching that the only *uttama-adhikārī* is Prabhupada and that all of the present gurus are *madhyama-adhikārīs*. Is this a correct way to think?

Gour Govinda Swami: The symptoms of *madhyam*, *uttama*, and *kaniṣṭha vaiṣṇavas* are given in *śāstra*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, etc. You should know these descriptions very well and thereby judge and see. Don't be convinced simply by what others are saying.

Devotee: But in the past, we thought some devotees were *uttama-adhikārī*. They apparently fit the descriptions, yet later they fall down.

Gour Govinda Swami: No, no, no. They were not *uttama-adhikārīs*. An *uttama-adhikārī* never falls down.

Devotee: How does one know who is an *uttama-adhikārī*?

Gour Govinda Swami: *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and the eleventh canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* give descriptions. You should know these things. Don't be rash and accept simply because of others' opinions. You should be convinced. Others' opinions are not sufficient. Just like followers of mundane political parties glorify their leaders in order to gain more followers. Our *ācāryas* have given an example: Like the sheep who are following a leader who falls into a ditch, they also all follow and fall in. Similarly, some devotees say, "So many are going to that person and taking shelter. Let me also go there."

No one is thinking, "Is it correct? Is he a bona fide person? Is he a pure devotee, *uttama-adhikārī*? Can he give me Krishna?" Not thinking, just following. You have done like that. Can you admit it? You were not serious. You accepted someone just because he had been labeled "guru". You were rash in your decision.

But *śāstra* and the *mahājānas* say, "Don't be rash." The disciple should personally examine the prospective guru and the guru should examine the prospective disciple. The guru should think, "This person wants to be my disciple. Will he be a real disciple or not? Disciple means under discipline. If I inflict strict discipline on him, will he be able to tolerate it? Will he obey me in all circumstances? Will he not leave me under any circumstances? If I

inflict severe discipline on him, will he revolt or will he be obedient? It is the guru's business to examine the prospective disciple, and then when he is satisfied he will accept.

Understand the story of how Gaura Kishore Das Babaji accepted Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati as his disciple. There are two types of devotees, *goṣṭhy-ānandīs* and *bhajanānandīs* — those who accept disciples for the purpose of spreading the preaching and those who don't accept disciples and stay in lonely places to do *bhajan*. We are *goṣṭhy-ānandīs*, but Gaura Kishore was a *bhajanānandī*. He was a *mahātma*, a great soul. Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati had already taken *harināma* from his father, Bhaktivinode Thakur. But Bhaktivinode Thakur ordered him to approach Gaura Kishore Das Babaji for initiation. So Bhaktisiddhanta went and requested him, "Please accept me as your disciple and give me *mantra-dīkṣā*." But Gaura Kishore wouldn't listen. He said, "Get out of here! I don't accept disciples. Get out! You are the son of a rich man, a great man. I don't accept disciples. Get out." Saraswati Thakur went back to his father and said, "He refused. He told me to get out. What should I do?"

Then his father Bhaktivinode Thakur scolded him, "You nonsense rascal! Don't come to me! Go and sit there until you get his mercy. It is better to end your life there. Don't come back here and show your face. I don't want to see you." Bhaktivinode was so strict. So Bhaktisiddhanta went back, sat down in front of Gaura Kishore's kutir and cried and cried. Finally, Gaura Kishore Das Babaji said, "This son of a great man, wealthy person, has become humble now."

This is the only qualification. One must become very humble. One should not be puffed up and proud: "I'm such a great man! I'm the son of such a great person!" Mahaprabhu says, *ṭṭṇād api sunīcena* — "Be humbler than a blade of grass on the street." [Śikṣāṣṭaka 3] Gaura Kishore Das Babaji was then pleased, and said, "All right, all right. Come, I'll accept you." He gave him such a severe test. It was not a cheap, superfluous thing. Spiritual matters are very serious. For guru to accept a disciple, that disciple must be obedient and throughout his life accept severe discipline inflicted on him. The disciple must be convinced, "I must accept such a person as guru who can give me cent per cent Krishna. He must be a pure devotee, *uttama-adhikārī*. This is the responsibility of a disciple and the responsibility

of a guru. This is the way it should be done, but you were not doing like that. You were superfluous, not serious. Therefore you met with such consequences. ❀

— From a darshan in Bhubaneswar, April 1989.

MAHAPRABHU'S DAILY PASTIMES

Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur's

Bhakti-ratnākara 12.3365-3366

Wise scholars have advised that one meditate on the *aṣṭa-kālīna-līlā* of Prabhu Sri Gaurasundara as follows: (1) *Niśānta-līlā* — At the end of the night (about the last one hundred and forty-four minutes of the night), think about Gaurachandra going to sleep in his own bed. (2) *Prātakāla-līlā* — In the early morning (from sunrise to one hundred and forty-four minutes afterwards), think of Prabhu rising from bed, washing his face in scented water, taking his oil massage, bathing, and eating. (3) *Purvāhna-līlā* — In the forenoon (approximately 6 a.m. to 12 a.m.), think about Gaurasundara's eagerness to go to the houses of his devotees. (4) *Madhyāhna-līlā* — At noon, think about the numerous humorous sports performed by the Lord as he wanders through Nabadwip. (5) *Aparāhna-līlā* — In the late afternoon (before dusk), think about Prabhu returning to his house. (6) *Sāyāhna-līlā* — At the time of dusk, think about the Lord going to his beautiful temple. (7) *Pradoṣa-līlā* — At night



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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श्री कृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

(up until approximately 1:20 at night), think about Prabhu enjoying his pastimes in the house of Srivas surrounded by his associates. (8) *Niśāyām or rātri-līlā* — At night (up until just before dawn), think of Sri Gaurasundara's *saṅkīrtana*. ❀

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THE DANCING OF GAURA RAY

The Medieval Poet Chaitanya Das

(*Bibhāsa-rāga*)

mahā-bhuja nācata caitanya-rāya
ke jāne kata kata bhāva śata śata
sonāra varaṇa gora-rāya

(Refrain) His arms long and graceful, Lord Chaitanya Ray dances. Who has the power to know how many hundreds and hundreds of ecstasies he feels? Lord Gaura Ray is splendid like gold.

preme dhara dhara aṅga niramala
pulaka aṅkura-śobhā
āra ki kahiba aśeṣa anubhava
hera-ite jaga-mana lobhā

He sheds tears of ecstatic divine love. His limbs are glorious. Splendid like sprouting blades of grass, the hairs of his body stand erect. What more shall I say? When the people of the world see him, their hearts yearn to attain his company.

śuniyā nija-guṇa nāma kīrtana
vibhava naṭana vibhavaṇa
nadīyā-pura-loka pāśarila duḥkha sukha
bhāsala prema-taraṇa

Hearing the chanting of his own glories and his own holy names, he dances, overcome with ecstasy. Forgetting their pains and pleasures, the people of Nadiya float in waves of ecstatic love.

ratana vitarāṇa prema-rasa varikhaṇa
akhila bhuvana siñcita
caitanya-dāsa gāne atula prema-dāne
muṇi se ha-iluṇ vañcita

He freely gives away the jewels of ecstatic love. He showers all the worlds with a great monsoon of the nectar of ecstatic love. Chaitanya Das sings: He gives away the peerless gift of ecstatic spiritual love. Only I did not receive that gift and was cheated! ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 187

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

11 October 2008

Śrī Pāśāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī, 25 Padmanābha, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation 2,381

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Hari-bhakti-vilāsa

PREACHING AND PURITY

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



It is my firm conviction that this Krishna consciousness movement of Lord Chaitanya's will be successful in all parts of the world if our students kindly continue their enthusiastic en-

deavors to distribute this message freely to all persons. Our movement is now appreciated all over the world and is gradually coming to the attention of the important leaders of the present society. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to keep our spiritual strength by rigidly following the regulative principles. Then we can deal adequately with all facilities offered by the Lord for expediting his holy mission. I am confident that all our sincere, intelligent young devotees like your good self will carry this program to a fruitful conclusion, namely delivering the holy name to all the fallen souls suffering in varieties of conditional misery and material happiness. Therefore, please execute your program for distribution of literatures and *saṅkīrtana* with increased vigor, and may Krishna bless your sincere efforts to serve him faithfully.

It is very good news that you are introducing courses in Krishna consciousness in the universities and yoga institutes. As you know, this is the only real yoga, *bhakti-yoga*, and is the only practical means for God realization in this age.

Therefore, you are doing the greatest good for your countrymen and the world at large by introducing this sublime movement for regaining our lost position as eternal servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna.

Please continue to distribute our books; that is a very important business. Your idea for film distribution is also good, so do it nicely in cooperation with the GBC. I am very anxious that at the same time as you carry out all these outside activities you are maintaining a strict schedule of temple activities. Such regular activities, like attendance at *ārati*, chanting of rounds, and study of literatures in the class, will keep you fit for effective outside preaching work. We must maintain our standard of purity, otherwise there will be a loss of spiritual strength and subsequent fall down. You should all be thoroughly convinced of the power of the Hare Krishna mantra to protect you in all circumstances, and chant accordingly at all times without offense. Then advancement will be swift and you will gradually come to see everything clearly so that you may act for the pleasure of the Lord without uncertainty. When one is spontaneously engaged in this way, always in the service of the Lord and anxious to avoid all mundane activities, he is actually experiencing the taste of bliss in Krishna consciousness. ॐ

— Letter to Damodara Das, 10 January 1971.

THE MOUSE, THE LAMP AND THE QUEEN

A Puranic History

Srila Jiva Goswami writes in Bhakti-sandarbha, anuccheda 153:

astu tāvat śuddha-bhakty-ābhāsasya vārtā,
aparādhātvena dṛśyamāno 'py asau mahā-
prabhāvo dṛśyate.

It is seen that the activities of pure bhakti when performed even without a devotional attitude are still very powerful.

He then cites an example from the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa of an ordinary mouse who became a devotee and a queen due to some superficial contact with the Lord. The same story is cited in Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 16.129. In his commentary on Hari-bhakti-vilāsa known as Digdarśinī-tīkā, Śrila Sanatan Goswami cites the story as being from Padma Purāṇa. The story is found in both the Viṣṇudharmottara and the Padma Purāṇa with somewhat different details. In the former (1.167), Markandeya Rishi relates the episode to King Vajra.

In the country of Vidarbha there lived a king named Chitraratha. He had one hundred-fifteen sons, but only one daughter, whose name was Lalitika. She was endowed with all good qualities and possessed matchless beauty. Her father gave her in marriage to the righteous king of Kashi. That law-abiding king of Kashi had three hundred wives, but Lalitika became his principal queen. Beginning from the dark half of the month of Āśvina (September-October), till the bright half of the month of Kārttika (October-November), it was Lalitika's daily practice to light thousands of lamps, both day and night, in the temple of Vishnu. She also sent lamps to the houses of brahmins, to crossroads of the streets, to various temples, at the bottom of holy trees, on the top of mountains, on the sandy banks of rivers, and on the surface of wells. Seeing her thus absorbed, her co-wives gathered together and asked her, "O fair eyed Lalitika, neglecting all other rituals, you always seem keen on lighting lamps in the temples of Vishnu. We are very curious to know why you do this. Please explain to us why you have so much faith in this activity?"

Lalitika replied: "O auspicious ladies! Listen carefully to my words, and I will tell you why it is that I have faith in the fruit of giving lamps. That worthy daughter of the lord of mountains, who is the beloved wife of Shiva, is famous in the country

of Madra in her form of the divine river named Umadevi. For blessing the masses of people, she was called by the brahmins to descend to the earth. On her banks there is a sacred place measuring eight miles in circumference. The water in that holy place is considered to contain waters from all the places of pilgrimage. Whoever dies there obtains an auspicious result. That goddess destroys sins whenever she is heard, wished for, or seen. Her holy place, named "Narasimha", destroys all sins. In the past, the Lord who has a combined form of a man and a lion had taken a bath there. In ancient times, the king of Sauvira constructed a temple of Lord Vishnu at that place. The priest there daily worshipped the Lord with flowers, fragrant scents, and the offering of lamps. One evening during the month of Kārttika, the lamp that had been offered to the Lord was almost extinguished. I was then living in that temple in the body of a female mouse. Thinking to eat the ghee-soaked wick, I seized it, but suddenly a cat came. I fled away out of fear with the wick in my mouth. My running made the flame of the lamp burn brightly as before. I then met with death and was later reborn as a daughter of the king of Vidarbha."

In the Padma Purāṇa version of this story (ut-tara-khanda, chapter 30), Lord Shiva relates the events to Narada Muni.

On the charming bank of the Saraswati River there was a hermitage known as Siddhashram. Formerly a brahmin named Kapila lived there. He was poor but learned in the Vedas, and maintained his family by begging. He worshipped Lord Vishnu by performing various vows and fasts. As part of his worship of the Lord, with great devotion he always lit lamps in his house for the pleasure of Vishnu.

A cat with sharp teeth was also living in the house. Day and night, the cat was searching for mice, and ate many in the house of the brahmin Kapila. One Ekādaśī day, that pure brahmin and his wife fasted and worshipped Vishnu. Singing and praying to the Lord and dancing in front of his deity, Kapila stayed awake. When it was midnight, the brahmin was finally overcome with sleep. Seeing that Kapila had fallen into a slumber, the cat quickly came there. He saw a small female mouse that had come to drink the oil in the lamp. He jumped and attacked, and the mouse ran away. While running away, the mouse bumped the lamp with its foot. Due to that contact, the lamp suddenly became bright. With the

suddenly increased light of the lamp, the brahmin woke up and continued his all-night vigil. The cat also stayed awake throughout that night. When the sun rose, the brahmin performed his daily duties and then broke the fast along with his relatives.

The magnanimous brahmin Kapila obtained many sons and grandsons, as well as grains, excellent health, and abundant riches. Finally, at the end of his life, Kapila was liberated from this material world due to his practice of offering lamps to the Lord.

In course of time, the female mouse also died and a wonderful divine airplane came and took her to the world of Vishnu. The cat also eventually met with death, and, ascending an excellent airplane surrounded by celestial nymphs, accompanied by hosts of Vidyadharas, and being praised with auspicious cries of victory, he also went to the world of Vishnu. After enjoying many pleasures there for hundreds of millions of years, that former cat took birth on the earth as a king named Sudharman. [In this connection, see "Prapanchika Vaikuntha", below.]

PRAPANCHIKA VAIKUNTHA

One question arises here: How can someone attain the Lord's abode and then return to the material world? After all, Krishna says in the *Gītā* (15.6), *yad gatvā na nivartante* — "Once attaining my abode, one never returns to this material world." The permanent nature of residence in the spiritual world is also described by Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in a number of places in his writings. Some examples:

From Vedic scriptures it is understood that sometimes even Brahma and Indra fall down, but a devotee in the transcendental abode of the Lord never falls. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 3.15.48)

The conclusion is that no one falls from the spiritual world, or Vaikuntha planet, for it is the eternal abode. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 3.16.26)

However, the *Bhāgavatam* (8.5.5) and other *Purāṇas* describe an abode of Lord Vishnu within the material universe. That planet is sometimes referred to as Prapanchika Vaikuntha ["*prapañcika*" means "consisting of the five material elements"]. There are many descriptions of persons attaining that place and then returning to this material world.

Maharaja Sudharman was religious-minded. He regularly worshipped the Lord and the brahmins, and he was handsome, brave, and very strong. His dear wife was endowed with all auspicious marks, devoted to her husband, and was of good character. Her name was Rupasundari, and she was the most beautiful among all ladies. Many sons and daughters were born to them. While the couple was thus enjoying each other's company, the month of *Kārttika* arrived. During that month, lamps are lit by those who are devoted to Vishnu.

One day, the king said to the queen, "Today is the auspicious *Prabodhini Ekādaśī* [also known as *Haribodhini* or *Utthānā Ekādaśī*, it is the last *Ekādaśī* of the Vaishnava month of *Kārttika*, and marks the end of Lord Vishnu's four-month slumber known as *cātur-māsya*]. With my senses controlled by fasting, today I will bathe in the holy place Pushkar and worship the imperishable lotus-eyed Lord of gods along with his consort Lakshmi."

Hearing these pleasing words, Rupasundari, who was always engaged in the well-being of her husband, replied, "O king, I desire to go with you to the sacred place Pushkara."

Then the king and queen, accompanied by groups of elephants, horses, chariots, and the family-priests, came to Pushkar. The king took bath and worshiped the Supreme Lord Vishnu. Standing in a charming temple that was full of rows of lights everywhere, the king suddenly saw a drawing of a cat. Upon seeing that picture, the king remembered his former existence, looked at the lotus-like face of his beloved, and smiled.

Rupasundari said, "O lord, why did you smile after looking at me?"

The king replied, "In a previous birth I was a cat in the house of a brahmin. There I ate hundreds of mice. Even though my intention was to catch mice to eat, since the result was that I guarded the lamp in front of Vishnu, I got, O Queen, the fruit of that deed. I first attained the world of Vishnu and now have obtained a kingdom here on earth.

Rupasundari said, "I, too, have gained recollection of my former existence. I was that small female mouse in the house of the brahmin. Once, on the *Prabodhini Ekādaśī* in *Kārttika*, when the lamp had become dim, I came out of my hole to snatch the wick so I could eat it. Emerging from the hole, I saw the deity of Vishnu decorated with flowers and the brahmin overcome with sleep. I then grabbed the wick. You, in the body of a cat, jumped up to attack me. I saw you and ran back

into the hole. In doing this, my foot struck the lamp and it made the wick suddenly burn bright. O lord of great kings, since I brightened the lamp in that way, I have now secured excellent beauty, obtained you as my husband, and also gained a kingdom, sons, and great happiness. Due to my inadvertent brightening of the lamp, I secured knowledge that is extremely difficult to obtain. By the fruit of even unconsciously assisting offering a lamp to Vishnu, we have been blessed to remember our former existences and all our sins have perished.”

After this discussion, the king and queen, with great faith, properly performed the rituals of offering a lamp to Vishnu at the holy place of Pushkar. As a result, the two of them obtained salvation, which is difficult for even the demigods to attain.

Thus, bhakti is so powerful that even the slightest touch of it possesses great power. As Krishna says in Bhagavad-gītā 2.40:

nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate
sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt

“In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear.” — MD. ❧

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

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KARTTIKA IN VRAJA Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, chapter 16

*mantra-dravya-vihīnaṁ ca vidhi-hīnaṁ ca pūjanam
manyate kārttike devo mathurāyāṁ yad-arcanam*

“Even if it is performed without the proper mantras and offerings and without following the rules and regulations, Lord Krishna considers worship of him in Mathura during *Kārttika* to be the most perfect kind of worship. (Text 159)

*yasya pāpasya yujyeta maraṇāntā viniṣkṛtiḥ
tac-chuddhy-artham idaṁ proktaṁ prāyaścittaṁ su-niścitaṁ
kārttike mathurāyāṁ vai śrī-dāmodara-pūjanam*

“Worship of Lord Damodar in Mathura during the month of *Kārttika* is the proper atonement for a lifetime of sins. (Text 160)

*yāni sarvāṇi tīrthāni nadā nadyaḥ sarāṁsi ca
kārttike nivasanty atra mātṛe sarva-maṇḍale*

“During the month of *Kārttika*, all holy streams, rivers, and lakes reside in the circle of Mathura. (Text 164)

*kārttike janma-sadane keśavasya ca ye narāḥ
sakṛt praviṣṭāḥ śrī-kṛṣṇaṁ te yānti param avyayam*

“They who once enter Lord Keshava’s birthplace in Mathura in the month of *Kārttika* will enter the spiritual world and meet Lord Krishna, the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead. (Text 165)

*paropahāsam uddiśya kārttike hari-pūjayā
mathurāyāṁ labhed bhaktyā kiṁ punaḥ śraddhayā naraḥ*

“A person who as a joke worships Lord Krishna in Mathura during *Kārttika* attains the Lord’s supreme abode. What, then, can be said of they who worship the Lord during *Kārttika* with faith and devotion?” (Text 166) ❧

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 188

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

24 October 2008

Śrī Ramā Ekādaśī, 10 Dāmodara, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation 2,390

Highlights

- **THE HIGHEST PERFECTION**

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

- **NOT JUST BY DRESS**

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

- **SRILA PRABHUPADA'S GIFTS**

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

- **WHAT TYPE OF KIRTAN IS BEST?**

THE HIGHEST PERFECTION

His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Why is Radha Kund so exalted? Because it belongs to Srimati Radharani, who is the most beloved object of Sri Krishna. Among all the *gopīs*, she is the most beloved. Similarly, her lake, Sri Radha Kund, is also described by great sages as the lake that is as dear to Krishna as Radha herself. Indeed, Krishna's love for Radha Kund and Srimati Radharani is the same in all respects. Radha Kund is very rarely attained, even by great personalities fully engaged in devotional service, not to speak of ordinary devotees who are only engaged in the practice of *vaidhī-bhakti*.

It is stated that a devotee will at once develop pure love of Krishna in the wake of the *gopīs* if he once takes a bath in Radha Kund. Srila Rupa Goswami recommends that even if one cannot live permanently on the banks of Radha Kund, he should at least take a bath in the lake as many times as possible. This is a most important item in the execution of devotional service. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur writes in this connection that Sri Radha Kund is the most select place for those interested in advancing their devotional service in the wake of the lady friends (*sakhīs*) and confidential serving maids (*mañjarīs*) of Srimati Radharani. Living entities who are eager to return home to the transcendental kingdom of God, Goloka Vrindavan, by

means of attaining their spiritual bodies (*siddha-deha*) should live at Radha Kund, take shelter of the confidential serving maids of Sri Radha, and under their direction engage constantly in her service. This is the most exalted method for those engaged in devotional service under the protection of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. In this connection, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur writes that even great sages and great devotees like Narada and Sanaka do not get an opportunity to come to Radha Kund to take their baths. What, then, to speak of ordinary devotees? If, by great fortune, one gets an opportunity to come to Radha Kund and bathe even once, he can develop his transcendental love for Krishna exactly as the *gopīs* did. It is also recommended that one should live on the banks of Radha Kund and should be absorbed in the loving service of the Lord. One should bathe there regularly and give up all material conceptions, taking shelter of Sri Radha and her assistant *gopīs*. If one is thus constantly engaged during his lifetime, after giving up the body he will return back to Godhead to serve Sri Radha in the same way as he contemplated during his life on the banks of Radha Kund. The conclusion is that to live on the banks of the Radha Kund and to bathe there daily constitute the highest perfection of devotional service. It is a difficult position to attain, even for great sages and devotees like Narada. Thus there is no limit to the glory of Sri Radha Kund. By serving Radha Kund, one can get an opportunity to become an

assistant of Srimati Radharani under the eternal guidance of the *gopīs*. ❧

— Purport to Nectar of Instruction 11

NOT JUST BY DRESS

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta

Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

One cannot gain anything simply by wearing the garb of a sannyasi. One can become a real sannyasi by becoming a staunch follower of his guru and by making the guru's service his life and soul. One should become such a Vaishnava sannyasi by becoming attached to both the spiritual master and the holy name. But those who indulge in bad association instead of serving Krishna under the guru's guidance will certainly be ruined. They will never know the Supreme Personality of Godhead or attain his service. One can cheat people by dressing as a sadhu, but the omniscient Lord, who gives the fruit of karma, will never leave such cheaters alone. Those who engage in bad association while dressed as sadhus are chopping at their own legs with an ax. ❧

— *Amṛta Vāṇī*, a collection of statements from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Originally compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Translated into English by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. Page 361.

SRILA PRABHUPADA'S GIFTS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

There are people who follow some principles of *dharma*, but they are *karma-niṣṭha*, *karmīs*. Out of crores of *karma-niṣṭhas*, one may find a *jñānī*. Such a *jñānī* is *śreṣṭha*, superior. Out of crores of such *jñānīs*, one may become liberated, *mukta*. *koṭi-mukta-madhya* 'durlabha' *eka kṛṣṇa-bhakta* — And out of crores of such liberated persons, one *kṛṣṇa-bhakta* is very rare. My revered spiritual master is such a devotee.

He has come here out of his causeless mercy. The heart of one who is a *vaiṣṇava-sādhu* bleeds seeing the suffering of the conditioned souls here in the material world.

mahānta-svabhāva ei tārīte pāmara

nija kārya nāhi tabu yāna tāra ghara [8.39]

The nature of a *mahātma* is that he has no business in this world. He is not a conditioned soul that is compelled to come here. *na karma-bandhanam janma vaiṣṇavānām ca vidyate* — A *vaiṣṇava-sādhu* has no *karma-bandhana*; he is not subject to birth and death. [Padma Purāṇa 6.229.58] Out of causeless mercy he descends to deliver the *pāmaras*, the most degraded souls.

When his guru, Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada Maharaja, first

saw him in 1922, he immediately recognized him as the person who has come to fulfill the prophecy of Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. In Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's line, the most famous *ācārya* is Bhaktivinode Thakur, so this succession is also known as *bhaktivinoda-dhārā*. Sri Bhaktivinode Thakur was such a *vaiṣṇava* that when he saw Western education and civilization spreading in India and thought of how the Indians were blindly imitating the Westerners, he became shocked. So he thought this message, these teachings of Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, should be preached in Western countries in the English language. It had to be done. Otherwise, the whole world would be doomed. So he started writing books in English first. Bhaktivinode then desired to have a qualified and powerful son who could spread the teachings of Sriman Mahaprabhu throughout the world. A very powerful *vaiṣṇava* was born, Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada Maharaja. He trained his disciples very nicely. Among them were many *sannyāsīs*. He sent some of them to the West to preach the science of Krishna consciousness in English. They came prior to the arrival of my revered spiritual master, Sri Srimad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. But they couldn't do anything. They went back. My *guru-mahārāja* was at the time a *grhastha*, not a *sannyāsī*. He was not staying in the *maṭha*. But he was such an empowered person, such a dear devotee of Mahaprabhu, Krishna, that he was able to perform this miracle. He was specially empowered by Mahaprabhu, Bhaktivinode Thakur, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami, and all of the previous *ācāryas*. He never twisted things. He just followed their instructions as they are. Because of this, he came out successful.

Nirviśeṣa-śūṇyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe — This *pāścātya-deśa*, Western world, is *nirviśeṣavāda*, *śūṇyavāda*, full of impersonalism and voidism, and the most sinful persons — *mlecchas* and *yavanas* — inhabit it. Sriman Mahaprabhu is *patita-pāvana*, deliverer of the *patitas*, most degraded persons. Yet how could Mahaprabhu's prophecy be fulfilled? Srila Prabhupada was especially empowered to accomplish that work. His heart was filled with so much mercy that even at such an old age he came to the Western world and in spite of facing great troubles he cast his merciful glance over the *patitas* and delivered them. The *Bhāgavatam* (3.5.3) states:

anugrahāyeha caranti nūnam bhūtāni bhavyāni janārdanasya — Great philanthropic souls travel on the earth on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to show compassion to the fallen souls.

Today, some people say, "There is no *sādhū*." But how can you see a *sādhū*? Have you the vision to see? A *sādhū* is not an ordinary person. He is not a living being of this material world. He has come down from Krishna's abode, from the spiritual kingdom. Just as you cannot see Krishna with material vision, you cannot see *sādhū* with material vision. You want to be a seer, but you are not a seer. Krishna is the seer. *Sādhū* is the seer. You are to be seen. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*madhya* 19.151) explains:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

After undergoing so many species of life in so many lakhs of *brahmāṇḍas*, if someone is fortunate enough, *bhāgyavān*, he comes in contact with a *sādhū*. When the *sādhū* casts his merciful glance on someone, then that person's good fortune arises. What does *sādhū* do? *Sādhū* comes here to give you Krishna. My *guru-mahārāja* is such a *sādhū*. How did he give Krishna? One devotee was just reading a letter from Prabhupada, "Just follow my instructions as they are. Chant sixteen rounds nicely, offenselessly, follow the four regulative principles, accept *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*. I am always with you." He is still here. A *vaiṣṇava* never dies. There is no birth or death for him. He is always here as Krishna is always here. If you have vision, you can see him. Otherwise, how can you see him? It is a question of vision, and that vision is obtained by the mercy of *sādhū*. You cannot get that vision in any other way. So many people say, "Oh, he is gone. He is no more." That is foolish. He is here in his books, instructions, and lectures. He is still here. You should develop the proper vision to see him, to get his mercy.

He opened Vaikunthas. He said, "These ISKCON temples are Vaikuntha. Come and take shelter here. This is Kali-yuga, but if you strictly follow these four regulative principles — no meat eating, no gambling, no intoxication, no illicit sex — accept a bonafide guru who can give you Krishna, then you will be free from the influence of Kali and you will be in Satya-yuga. You will be in Vaikuntha." He made all sorts of arrangements for everyone to be engaged. For *saṁnyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs* — those who have given up family life and household affairs,

tyakta gr̥ha — they may take shelter in the temple and be engaged twenty-four hours a day in the loving service of Krishna under the guidance of guru. He also made arrangements for those who are *gr̥hasthas*. "You *gr̥hasthas* should help this temple. You should come take part every day, if you can find the time. If not daily, once a week, as the Sunday festival is there. If not weekly, once a fortnight or once a month you should come, associate with the devotees, chant, dance, take *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*, hear *hari-kathā*, *kṛṣṇa-kathā* — that will make your life successful." For those who cannot follow the regulative principles, he also made arrangements. "They are wealthy persons, earning money, but they cannot follow. They have no time. Many people say, 'We cannot do this.' All right, how can they get the mercy?" He made the Life Membership program. "They will give some percent of their hard-earned money. Thereby, they will get mercy, *sukṛti*. That will help them develop Krishna consciousness." He even trained his disciples as preachers and sent them throughout the world, "Go out and preach Krishna consciousness." He has made all of these arrangements.

This is a day we should glorify and remember him. We should beg for mercy at his lotus feet. Cry for his mercy. *vaiṣṇava kṛpā pāya sarva siddhi* — If you can get the mercy of such a *vaiṣṇava sādhū* you will achieve the perfection of your life. The *sādhū's* mercy is so powerful. Only *sādhū's* mercy is required, nothing else. What can you do? *karma nāhi, jñāna nāhi, kṛṣṇa bhakti na* — I have nothing, no *karma*, no *jñāna*, no *bhakti*. *tomāra karuṇā sāra* — I am completely dependent on your mercy. Beg for his mercy, it is so powerful. I hope you get the mercy of my *guru-mahārāja* and make your life successful. ❀

— Excerpt from a lecture on Srila Prabhupada's disappearance day, New York, 10 November 1991. Printed as chapter two of *My Revered Spiritual Master*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India. 2007

WHAT TYPE OF KIRTAN IS BEST?

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has written (*Śikṣāṣṭaka* 1): *param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam* — "All glories to congregational Sri Krishna *kīrtana*." In *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (173), Srila Jiva Goswami has described that in Kali Yuga any of the nine types of devotional service can be executed, but to be effective they must be done in conjunction with *kīrtana* — *yad anyāpi bhaktiḥ kalau kartavyā, tadā tat saṁnyogenaiva*. *Kīrtana* is the best and only means of success in Kali Yuga.

But there are different types of *kīrtana*. Bhagavan Das, a Gaudiya Vaishnava devotee from Orissa who was a disciple of Srila Syamananda Prabhu, composed a book called *Gaurāṅga Bhāgavata*. Therein he raises a question, "If in the first verse of his *Śikṣāṣṭakam* Mahāprabhu is emphasizing *kīrtana*, which type is he stressing?"

In the third section of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur's *Kalyāṇa Kālpa-taru*, five different types of *kīrtana* are described:

1) *Nāma-kīrtana* — songs containing the Lord's names. For example, the songs beginning with the words: "*vibhāvarī śeṣa*" (*Kalyāṇa Kālpa-taru* 3.4.9), "*yaśomatī-nandana*" (Bhaktivinode's *Gītāvalī* 7.1) and "*hari haraye namaḥ kṛṣṇa yādavāya namaḥ*".

2) *Rūpa-kīrtana* — songs describing the beautiful form of the Lord. For example, the song beginning with: "*janama saphala tā'r*" (*Kalyāṇa Kālpa-taru* 3.4.11).

3) *Guṇa-kīrtana* — glorifications of the Lord's wonderful qualities. Examples are the songs beginning with: "*bahirmukha ho'ye*" (*Kalyāṇa Kālpa-taru* 3.4.12) and "*gaurāṅga karuna koro*" (Narottam Das).

4) *Līlā-kīrtana* — songs focusing on the Lord's extraordinary pastimes. For example, the song beginning with: "*jīve kṛpā kori*" (*Kalyāṇa Kālpa-taru*

3.4.14) and the third section of Bhaktivinode's *Gītā-mālā*, "*Śoka-śatana*", subtitled *Śrī Gaurāṅga-līlā-carita*, describing the pastime of the death of Srivas Thakur's son during one of Mahāprabhu's nocturnal *kīrtanas*.

5) *Rasa-kīrtana* — songs describing Krishna's relationships with his dear devotees. An example is the song starting with, "*kṛṣṇa vaiśṇv-gīta śuni*" (*Kalyāṇa Kālpa-taru* 3.4.16).

Some Gaudiya Vaishnavas have emphasized *līlā* and *rasa-kīrtana*, while others, including the followers of Srila Saraswati Thakur, have placed more stress on *nāma-kīrtana*. Which, if either, is more important? Bhagavan Das says that Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has himself answered that question in the second verse of *Śikṣāṣṭaka*: *nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktiḥ* — *kīrtana* of the Lord's names is the best.

This point is substantiated by *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 2.1.11:

*etan nirvidyamānānām icchatām akuto-bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītaṁ harer nāmānukīrtanam*

O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.

Viswanatha Chakravarti Thakur explains in his commentary on this verse:

Although various *śāstras* glorify *bhakti*, a question arises: Amongst the different processes of *bhakti*, which is *mukhya*, the main process? It is *nāma-kīrtana*. *Śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, and *smaraṇa* — hearing, chanting and remembering — are chief amongst all the processes of *bhakti*, as evidenced in the *śloka* beginning "*tasmād bhārata*" (*Bhāg.* 2.1.5). This verse (*etan nirvidyamānānām*) describes that amongst these three processes, *kīrtana* is the best. — MD

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 189 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

9 November 2008

Śrī Utthānā Ekādaśī, 26 Dāmodara, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation 2,395

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Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

ENTERING INTO VRINDAVAN

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

If someone comes to this Vrindavan *tīrtha* with the bodily concept of life, he does not derive any benefit. *yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile* — his mentality is that a *tīrtha* simply means *salila*, a body of water. (Bhāg. 10.84.13) Just like generally people come here, take their bath in the Yamuna River, and think, "Now my business is finished. I came to Vrindavan. I have taken my bath in the Yamuna and purchased some things. Now let me go home. I have finished my *tīrtha*." But *śāstra* says, "No. That is not *tīrtha*." *Janeṣv abhijñeṣu* — if you want to purify yourself, then in the *tīrtha* you must search out *abhijñā*. *Abhijñā* means one who knows. One who knows Krishna. ❧

— Lecture in Vrindavan, 14 March 1974.

THE GOPIS' WORSHIP OF GODDESS KATYAYANI

Excerpts from

*Srila Kavi Karṇapura's
Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū, chapter 12*

The *gopīs* set the excellent *pūjā* items on the sandy white banks of the Yamuna,

which glistened like camphor powder. They chose a clean, quiet place for *pūjā*. It was a secluded location, undisturbed by the wind and free from the contamination of Yamuna foam and the footprints of birds and animals. Desiring to make a *mūrti* of goddess Katyayani out of sand, the highly qualified *gopīs* spoke in sweet voices resembling the soft cooing of cuckoos.

One *gopī* said, "O my friends! We have never before observed the *kātyāyanī-vrata*. Are we going to conduct the worship individually or all together? Let us decide in such a way that we do not end up with a disaster. With faith and intelligence we should take a decision."

The other *sakhis* concluded, "We should do the *pūjā* all together in a group. To perform *pūjā* separately is not good. Worshiping together will be more beneficial."

The experts in *pūjā* chanted sweet verses praising Krishna's attributes while offering handfuls of fragrant flowers to a *mūrti* of Katyayani that they had molded from sand. Seeing the elegant *mūrti*, the *gopīs* felt that Bhagavati Katyayani herself had appeared in that *mūrti*. The *gopīs* thought, "How fortunate we are to perceive goddess Bhagavati, even though we have not yet installed the deity!" Understanding that they had satisfied Devi Katyayani, the *gopīs* felt elated, and this

[next column](#) ❧



strengthened their determination to execute the vow. To properly please Katyayani, the *gopīs* did *manasi-pūjā* of the *mūrti* before commencing the worship. While concealing the confidential desires within their hearts and controlling their minds, the *gopīs* silently fetched water from the Yamuna. The *gopīs* kept Krishna locked inside their hearts like a precious treasure. After washing their hands and doing *ācamana*, they sat down on seats made of kusa grass. Fixing their minds in the mode of goodness, the *gopīs* silently worshiped Katyayani. To invoke Katyayani's presence in the *mūrti*, the expert *pūjārīs* among them respectfully uttered the *mantra*:

*ihāgacchāgaccha devī, sannidhānam ihācara,
kṛṣṇasya sannidhānam naḥ, prāpayasva namo namaḥ*

"Come, Devi! Please enter this *mūrti*. Please help us come close to Krishna. We pay obeisances to you again and again." (Text 16)

After invoking Katyayani-devi in this way, the young *gopīs* carefully placed an *āsana* before her. With great bliss, they humbly requested the glorious Katyayani:

*svāgataṁ tava he devī svāgataṁ te nivedyate
kṛpayā kārayāsmākaṁ svāgataṁ kṛṣṇam antike*

"Welcome Devi! We offer our heartfelt respects to you. Please accept this splendid *āsana*. O Devi! May your visit be auspicious! We secretly request you to be merciful to us and bring Krishna before us." (Text 18)

While bathing Katyayani's feet in water mixed with the appropriate ingredients, the *gopīs* said:

*upapādyam idaṁ pādyam pādāyor abhivādyayoh
sompādyatām anādye naḥ kṛṣṇasyādye samāgamah
kṛṣṇa-prasveda-pādyam naḥ śīśī-kurutām uraḥ*

"O eternal Durga! Please accept this worship of your feet! May our breasts be cooled by this foot water, which reminds us of Krishna's perspiration! Please help us meet our beloved Krishna." (Text 20)

Following the foot wash, the *vraja-kumārīs* offered priceless *arghya*, water mixed with various other valuable substances that are fit to be offered at the respectful reception of guests.

*apy arghitaughair arghyā tvam tubhnyam argho 'yam arghitah
mahārghah śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅgah kriyatām so-argha eva naḥ*

"O Devi! You are the highly valued worshipable object of all the demigods. We offer this valuable presentation in hopes that you will soon award us the most valuable association of Krishna." (Text 22)

After *arghya*, the *gopīs* presented *ācamana* (mouthwash).

*idam ācamanīyam te kamanīyam upāhṛtam
kṛṣṇasyācamanīyam tvam ānayāsmākam ānanam*

"O Devi! We offer this pleasant *ācamana* to you in hopes that we will be able to drink the nectar of Krishna's kisses." (Text 23)

Then they offered *madhuparka* (a pleasant drink composed of honey, ghee, and yogurt), saying,

*madhuro madhuparkas te mukha-samparkam ārpitaḥ
kuru kṛṣṇādharma-putī madhuparka-kṣamā hi naḥ*

"O Devi! We offer you this sweet *madhuparka* with the desire to taste Krishna's honey-sweet lips." (Text 24)

Absorbed in *samādhi* and overcome with *prema-rasa*, those young, pure-hearted girls with thin waists then offered *ācamana* again, while saying,

Nāma-tattva

THE PURE NAME Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode's Jaiva Dharma, chapter 23

Raghunath Das Babaji: Chanting of the pure name of Krishna can only be attained when *śraddhā*, faith, fully matures into *ananya-bhakti*, single-minded devotion. Any chanting at a level lower than *ananya-bhakti* is either *nāmābhāsa*, the semblance of chanting *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, or *nāmāparādha*, offensive chanting of *kṛṣṇa-nāma*.

Vijaya: Gurudeva, should chanting *harināma* be considered the *sādhya*, goal, or the *sādhana*, process to attain the goal?

Raghunath Das Babaji: At the stage of *sādhana-bhakti*, chanting *harināma* may be considered the *sādhana*. But at the stage of *bhāva-bhakti* or *prema-bhakti*, then chanting *harināma* is indeed realized as the *sādhya-vastu*, the supreme goal of spiritual attainment. The pure chanting of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* manifests in degrees proportionate to the intensity of pure devotion of the chanter. ❧

— Adapted from the edition translated by Sri Sarvabhavana Das. Published by Brhat Mrdanga Press. Vrindavan. 2003.

*punar-ācamanīyaṁ te kamanīyaṁ idam punaḥ
punar ācamanīyaṁ bho kṛṣṇasyānanam astu naḥ*

"We offer you this pleasant *punar-ācamana* with the desire to repeatedly drink the nectar from Krishna's mouth." (Text 25)

They brought aromatic oil in a jeweled container for massaging the body. Even without any wind, it automatically dispersed its rich fragrance through the air. It was an attractive, deep red oil just suitable for massage. To remove the oil they used a soft scented powder, which seemed like a spray from a fountain of concentrated bliss. They then respectfully offered bathing water scented with the finest camphor and kept it in a golden vessel. Next, the Vraja *kumaris* very methodically offered a neatly folded *sari* woven with golden threads. They brought the best quality flawless jewels and ornaments made by expert goldsmiths and attractive ointments made of *aguru*, camphor, and musk.

*anulepanam etat te devi divyam upāhṛtam
kṛṣṇānulepa-saurabhyaiḥ surabhī-kārayasva naḥ*

"O Devi! We offer you these opulent ointments. Please make us fragrant with the fragrance of Krishna's ointments." (Text 32)

The air attained good fortune by carrying the pleasing, celestial aromas of the various scents presented by the *gopīs*.

*gandhair gandha-vahānandī devi gandho 'yam arpitaḥ
kṛṣṇāṅga-gandhenāsmākam aṅgāni surabhī-kuru*

"O Devi! We offer you these scents that enliven the nostrils. Please make our limbs fragrant with the aroma from Krishna's body." (Text 33)

They offered Vrindavan flowers from all six seasons, which were very colorful, covered with sweet pollen, and surrounded by bees.

*idam vṛndāvanodbhūtaṁ prasūnam devi gṛhyatām
rada-prasūnaiḥ kṛṣṇasya pūjitāḥ santu no 'dharāḥ*

"O Devi! Please accept this flower that has arisen from the land of Vrindavan. And in return, let our lips be worshiped by the flower of Krishna's teeth." (Text 34)

They offered incense made from black *aguru*, *khus* root, and clusters of the finest *gulgul*, saying,

*su-gandhir dhūpa-dhūmo 'yam dhūpas te devi kalpitaḥ
dhūpitā bhava naś cittam dhūpitaṁ śitalī-kuru*

"O Devi! We offer you this fragrant incense smoke. Please become fragrant and cool our burning hearts." (Text 35)

While offering opulent *ghee* lamps mixed with camphor, the *gopīs* prayed,

*karpūra-varti-surabhir devi dīpo 'yam arpitaḥ
kṛṣṇa-kaustubha-dīpena dīptaṁ nas stād uro-grham*

"O Devi! We offer you this lamp fragrant with camphor. Please illumine the house of our bosom with the lamp of Krishna's *kaustubha* jewel." (Text 36)

They offered milk, butter, rock candy, bananas, coconuts, *mung dal*, sun-dried rice, cakes soaked in sugar water, *malpoa*, sweet rice, cooked grains, *amṛta-keli*, and assorted small tasty cakes covered with powdered rock-candy icing. While presenting these delicacies to Katyayani, the girls prayed,

*niravadyaṁ devi hṛdyaṁ naivedyam upayujyatām
sampādayasva kṛṣṇasya naivedyaṁ no navam vayaḥ*

"Please eat all these pure and pleasing food offerings. And please give us the ever-fresh food remnants of Krishna." (Text 37)

Fixing their minds on their goal, the *gopīs* chanted the following *mantra* with full feeling:

*kātyāyāni mahā-māye, mahā-yoginy adhiśvari,
nanda-gopa-sutaṁ devi, patiṁ me kuru te namaḥ*

"O goddess Katyayani! O great potency of the Lord! O possessor of great mystic power and mighty controller of all! Please make the son of the cowherd Nanda Maharaja our husband. We offer our obeisances unto you." (Text 38)

Then they muttered *japa* with clear pronunciation. Next, while offering *tāmbula* and *ācamana*, the *gopīs* said,

*sailāla-vaṅga-karpūram tāmbūlam idam aśyatām
kṛṣṇasya tāmbūla-rasair adharāḥ santu no 'runāḥ*

"Please relish this *tāmbūla* made of betel, cloves, camphor, and cardamom. And please color our lips with the juice of Krishna's *tāmbūla*." (Text 39)

Performing *ārati*, they said,

*nīrājayāmi tvām dīpa-stavakena maheśvari
nīrājītāni kṛṣṇasya tvīṣāṅgāni bhavantu naḥ*

"O Mahesvari! We show these lamps to you in hopes that you will please illumine our limbs with the glow of Krishna's limbs." (Text 40)

After *ārati*, they gracefully bowed down on the ground and offered eloquent prayers disclosing their minds' desires. The *gopīs* prayed,

*amba heramba mātā tvām stotum stokam apīśvaraḥ
na tvad-īśo na prajeśo na vāg-īśo 'pare kutaḥ*

*rasanād eva rasanā-kaṇḍū-khaṇḍanataḥ param
vayaṁ tathāpi stumahe 'stu maheśvari te kṛpā*

*prabhaviṣṇor mahā-viṣṇor yoga-śaktis tvam uttamā
bhāsi kartum akartum cānyathā kartum apīśvari*

tvam eva tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiś ca tvam sântiḥ kṣântir eva ca
tvam avidyā ca vidyā ca bandha-mokṣa-karī nṛṇām
mātaḥ sarvāṇi sarvāṇi jaganti tvad-apāṅgataḥ
unmīlanti nimīlanti bhavanti vibhavanti ca

sarva-maṅgala-mūrdhanye mūrdhany eva divaukasām
tavājñā ca samajñā ca rāja-haṁsīva rājate

parāt paratare kṛṣṇa-pare parama-vaiṣṇavi
paropakāra-parame parameśvare te namaḥ

manojñāsi manojñāsi tvam sarvasyaiva dehinaḥ
dehi naḥ pati-rūpeṇa devi gopendra-nandanam

“O mother of Ganesh! Neither your husband Mahadev, nor Brahma, nor Brihaspati, can offer suitable praise to you, what to speak of others! We are greedy only to taste Krishna. Therefore, we glorify you so that you will stop the itching of our tongues. O Mahesvari, please shower your mercy upon us!

“You are called Yogamaya, the potency of Maha Vishnu, who possesses all energies. You have the power to do the impossible. You are peace, tolerance, nourishment, satisfaction, knowledge and ignorance. Although you bind the living entities, you are the giver of liberation. O mother of all, by your glance the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world takes place!

“O Devi! You are the pinnacle of all auspiciousness. Your order and glories are sitting like a swan on the heads of all the *devatās*. You are expert in worshiping Krishna, and



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A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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श्री कृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

you are the supreme Vaishnavi. O Parameshwari! O supreme goddess! You always engage in the welfare of others. We pay our respects unto you. You perfectly understand the minds of all living entities. So please fulfill our desire to achieve Krishna as our husband.” (Texts 42-49) ❀

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A REAL SERVANT

IS NOT AN ENJOYER

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta

Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

*sādhavo hṛdayaṁ mahyaṁ sādhuṇāṁ hṛdayaṁ tv aham
mad-anyat te na jānanti nāhaṁ tebhya manāg api*

The devotees are always in my heart, and I am always in the hearts of the devotees. The devotee does not know anything beyond me, and I also cannot forget the devotee. There is a very intimate relationship between the pure devotees and me. Pure devotees in full knowledge are never out of spiritual touch, and therefore they are very much dear to me. (*Bhāg.* 9.4.68)

One of them offers worship and the other one accepts it. The Lord allows the subordinate to serve him. The mood of servant and master makes the Lord’s pastimes complete.

“I will enjoy the Lord as my order supplier.” This is the mentality of unfortunate materialistic people. *Karmīs* and *jñānīs* are sense enjoyers. They have a strong tendency to enjoy and they are not interested in the Lord’s enjoyment. “Let the Lord serve us so that we become the master.” This attitude is ridiculous.

By speaking the above verse, the Supreme Lord has refuted this attitude. The devotees always serve the Lord. They do not waste their time serving dogs, cows, elephants, horses, and so on. If we act in a way that will simply help us in our enjoyment, then we become disinterested in Krishna’s service. ❀

— Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. *Bhāgavat Tātparyā*. English translation by Bhumipati Das. Rasbihari Lal and Sons. Vrindavan. 2005. Pp. 183-184.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 190 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

23 November 2008

Śrī Utpannā Ekādaśī, 10 Keśava, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation 2,402

Highlights

• MEDITATION ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

Sripad Shankaracharya

• NAMA-TATTVA: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NAME AND THE FORM

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur

• WHEN WILL NITAI BE MERCIFUL TO ME?

Prema Das

MEDITATION ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

Sripad Shankaracharya's Gīta-dhyāna

*Introduction, translation and commentary
by His Divine Grace A.C.*

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Versification by Hayagriva Das Adhikari

Sri Shankaracharya — or Shankar — is considered to be an incarnation of Lord Shiva, as the *Padma Purāṇa* testifies. Appearing in India in the 6th century A.D., he single-handedly drove the Buddhist philosophy out of India and reestablished Vedic culture, all in his short lifetime of 32 years. Although he took up the impersonalist guise to better battle the Buddhists — impersonalism is much akin to Buddhism — the commentary rendered below as well as other writings reveal him to be a devotee of Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Shankar's most famous treatise is *Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi*, and his other works include *Śārīraka-bhāṣya* and Prayers for Krishna.

*om pāṛthāya pratibodhitām bhagavatā nārāyaṇena svayam
vyāseṇa grathitām purāṇa muninā madhye mahā-bhārata
advaitāmṛta-varṣiṇīm bhagavatām aṣṭādaśādhyāyīṇīm
amba! tām anusandadhāmi bhagavad-gīte bhavad-veṣiṇīm*

O Bhagavad-gītā,

Through Thy eighteen chapters

Thou showerest upon man
The immortal nectar
Of the wisdom of the Absolute.
O blessed *Gītā*,
By Thee, Lord Krishna Himself
Enlightened Arjun.
Afterward, the ancient sage Vyas
Included Thee in the *Mahābhārata*.
O loving mother,
Destroyer of man's rebirth
Into the darkness of this mortal world,
Upon Thee I meditate. (Text 1)

*namo 'stu te vyāsa viśāla-buddhe
phullāravindāyata-patra-netra
yena tvayā bhārata-taila-pūrṇaḥ
prajvālito jñānamayaḥ pradīpaḥ*

Salutations to thee, O Vyas,
Thou art of mighty intellect,
And shine eyes
Are large as the petals
Of the full-blown lotus.
It was thou
Who brightened this lamp of wisdom,
Filling it with the oil
Of the *Mahābhārata*. (Text 2)

PURPORT: Srimad Shankaracharya was an impersonalist from the materialist point of view. But he never denied the spiritual form known as *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha* or the eternal all-blissful form of knowledge which existed before the material creation.

When he spoke of Supreme Brahman as impersonal, he did not mean that the Lord's *sac-cid-ānanda* form was to be confused with a material conception of personality. In the very beginning of his commentary on the *Gītā*, he maintains that Narayan, the Supreme Lord, is transcendental to the material creation. The Lord existed before the creation as the transcendental personality, and he has nothing to do with material personality. Lord Krishna is the same Supreme Personality, and he has no connection with a material body. He descends in his spiritual eternal form, but foolish people mistake his body to be like unto ours. Shankar's preaching of impersonalism is especially meant for teaching foolish persons who consider Krishna to be an ordinary man composed of matter.

No one would care to read the *Gītā* if it had been spoken by a material man, and certainly Vyasa-dev wouldn't have bothered to incorporate it into the history of the *Mahābhārata*. According to the above verses, *Mahābhārata* is the history of the ancient world, and Vyasa-dev is the writer of this great epic. *Bhagavad-gītā* is identical with Krishna; and because Krishna is the Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no difference between Krishna and his words. Therefore the *Bhagavad-gītā* is as worshipable as Lord Krishna himself, both being absolute. One who hears *Bhagavad-gītā* "as is" actually hears the words directly from the lotus lips of the Lord. But unfortunate persons say that the *Gītā* is too antiquated for the modern man, who wants to find out God by speculation or meditation.

*prapanna-pārijātāya-totra-vetraika-pāṇaye
jñānamudrāya kṛṣṇāya gītāmṛta-duhe namaḥ*

I salute Thee, O Krishna,
O Thou who art the refuge
Of ocean-born Lakshmi
And all who take refuge
At Thy lotus feet.
Thou art indeed
The wish-fulfilling tree
For Thy devotee.
Thy one hand holds a staff
For driving cows,
And Thy other hand is raised —

The thumb touching the tip
Of Thy forefinger,
Indicating divine knowledge.
Salutations to Thee, O Supreme Lord,
For Thou art the milker
Of the ambrosia of the *Gītā*. (Text 3)

PURPORT: Srimad Shankaracharya explicitly says, "You fools, just worship Govinda and that *Bhagavad-gītā* spoken by Narayan himself," yet foolish people still conduct their research work to find out Narayan; consequently they are wretched and they waste their time for nothing. Narayan is never wretched nor *daridra* [poor]; rather, he is worshiped by the goddess of fortune, Lakshmi, as well as all living entities. Shankar declared himself to be "Brahman," but he admits Narayan or Krishna to be the Supreme Personality who is beyond the material creation. He offers his respects to Krishna as the Supreme Brahman

Nāma-tattva

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NAME AND THE FORM Sri la Thakur Bhaktivinode's From *Jaiva Dharma* chapter 23

Vijaya: "Are there any distinctions between *kṛṣṇa-nāma* and *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*, Krishna's name and Krishna's form?"

Raghunath Das Babaji: "No, there are no differences whatsoever. However, there is one unique, even mystical feature in this subject: *Harināma* is more merciful than *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*. Offences committed against *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa* are never forgiven by Krishna; however, offences against either *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa* or *kṛṣṇa-nāma* are both kindly absolved by the mercy of *harināma*. Therefore, one should understand and commit to memory the ten offenses to *harināma*. Then, one must meticulously avoid perpetrating these offenses, because one must rise above *nāmāparādha* in order to chant *śuddha-harināma*. ❧

— Adapted from the edition translated by Sri Sarvabhavana Das. Published by Brhat Mridanga Press. Vrindavan. 2003.

or *para-brahman* because he (Krishna) is worshipable by everyone. Only the fools and enemies of Krishna who cannot understand what *Bhagavad-gītā* is (though they make commentaries on it) say, "It is not the personal Krishna to whom we have to surrender ourselves utterly, but to the unborn, beginningless eternal who speaks through Krishna." Fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Whereas Shankar, the greatest of the impersonalists, offers his due respects to Krishna and his book *Bhagavad-gītā*, the foolish say that "it is not to the personal Krishna." Such unenlightened people do not know that Krishna is absolute and that there is no difference between his inside and outside. The difference of inside and outside is experienced in the dual material world. In the absolute world there is no such difference, because in the absolute everything is spiritual (*sac-cid-ānanda*), and Narayan or Krishna belongs to the absolute world. In the absolute world there is only the factual personality, and there is no distinction between body and soul.

*sarvopaniṣado gāvo dogdhā gopāla nandanah
pārtho vatsah sudhir bhoktā dugdhanḥ gītāmṛtam mahat*

The Upanishads
Are as a herd of cows,
Lord Krishna, son of a cowherd,
Is their milker,
Arjun is the calf,
The supreme nectar of the *Gītā*
Is the milk,
And the wise man
Of purified intellect
Is the drinker. (Text 4)

PURPORT: Unless one understands spiritual variegatedness, one cannot understand the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is said that Krishna's name, form, quality, pastimes, entourage and paraphernalia are all *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa* — in short, everything of his transcendental association is of the same composition of spiritual bliss, knowledge and eternity. There is no end to his name, form, etc., unlike the material world where all things have their end. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, only fools deride him, whereas it is Shankar, the greatest impersonalist, who worships him, his cows,

and his pastimes as the son of Vasudev and pleasure of Devaki.

*vasudeva-sutaṁ devaṁ kāmṣa-cāṇūra-mardanam
devakī-paramānandaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ vande jagad-gurum*

Thou son of Vasudev,
Destroyer of the demons Kamsa and Canura,
Thou supreme bliss of Mother Devaki,
O Thou guru of the universe,
Teacher of the worlds,
Thee, O Krishna, I salute. (Text 5)

PURPORT: Shankar describes him as the son of Vasudev and Devaki. Does he mean thereby that he is worshiping an ordinary material man? He worships Krishna because he knows that Krishna's birth and activities are all supernatural. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4th chapter), Krishna's birth and activities are mysterious and transcendental and therefore only the devotees of Krishna can know them perfectly. Shankar was not such a fool that he would accept Krishna as an ordinary man and at the same time offer him all devotional obeisances, knowing him as the son of Devaki and Vasudev. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, only by knowing the transcendental birth and activities of Krishna can one attain liberation by acquiring a spiritual form like Krishna. There are five different kinds of liberations. One who merges into the spiritual auras of Krishna, known as impersonal Brahman effulgence, does not fully develop his spiritual body. But one who fully develops his spiritual existence becomes an associate of Narayan or Krishna in different spiritual abodes. One who enters into the abode of Narayan develops a spiritual form exactly like Narayan (four-handed), and one who enters into the highest spiritual abode of Krishna, known as Goloka Vrindavan, develops a spiritual form of two hands like Krishna. Shankar, as an incarnation of Lord Shiva, knows all these spiritual existences, but he did not disclose them to his then Buddhist followers because it was impossible for them to know about the spiritual world. Lord Buddha preached that void is the ultimate goal, so how could his followers understand spiritual variegatedness? Therefore Shankar said *brahma satya jagat mithyā*, or material variegatedness is false but spiritual variegatedness

is fact. In the *Padma Purāṇa*, Lord Shiva has admitted that he had to preach the philosophy of *māyā* or illusion in the *Kali-yuga* as another edition of the “void” philosophy of Buddha. He had to do this by the order of the Lord for specific reasons. He, however, disclosed his real mind by recommending that people worship Krishna, for no one can be saved simply by mental speculations composed of word jugglery and grammatical maneuvers. Shankar instructs further: *bhaja govindam bhaja govindam bhaja govindam mūḍha-mate, prāpte sannihite kāle na hi na hi rakṣati ḍukṛñ karaṇe*. “You intellectual fools, just worship Govinda, just worship Govinda, just worship Govinda. Your grammatical knowledge and word jugglery will not save you at the time of death.”

(To be concluded in the next issue.)

WHEN WILL NITAI BE MERCIFUL?

Prema Das

For more information about the poet Prema Das, see Bindus 122 and 169.

(Barāḍī-rāga)

*hari hari nitāi kabe karuṇā karibe
saṁsāra-vāsanā mora kabe dūra habe*



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Hari! Hari! When will Lord Nitai be merciful? When will material desires flee far away from me?

*kabe vā kāṅgāla-veśe vṛndāvane yāba
śyāma-kunḍa rādhā-kunḍa nayane heriba*

When, wearing the garments of a beggar, will I live in Vrindavan? When will I see Shyama Kund and Radha Kund with my own eyes?

*vaṁśī-vaṭera chāyāya giyā jīvana juḍāba
kabe govardhana-mūle gaḍāgaḍi diba*

When, attaining the shade of the Vamsi Vata tree, will I feel my life filled with cooling bliss? When at the foot of Govardhan Hill will I roll on the ground?

*māyā-moha puruṣa-deha kabe vā chāḍiba
sakhira anugā haiyā caraṇa seviba*

When will I give up this human body made of *māyā*'s illusions? When, attaining the form of a follower of the *gopīs*, will I serve the feet of the divine couple?

*śrī-rūpa-mañjarī-sakhira āśraya la-iba
vāma-pāśe rahi aṅge cāmara ḍhulāba*

When will I take shelter of Sri Rupa Manjari? When, standing at her side, will I fan the divine couple with a *camara* whisk?

*ekāsane yugala-kiśora vasāiba
eka mālā duhuñ gale kabe vā parāba*

When will I give the divine couple a sitting place on a single throne? When will I place a single flower garland around their necks?

*kāṅgāla haiyā vraje giyā kabe vā bhramiba
ghare ghare mādrukuri bhikṣā māgi khāba*

When, becoming a beggar, will I wander in Vrindavan? When will I eat by begging from house to house?

*prema dāsa kahe kabe hena bhāgya habe
gaurāṅga balite mora pāpa prāṇa yābe*

Prema Das asks when he will become fortunate in these ways, and when, calling out “Gauranga!”, will he leave his body made of sins? ❀

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 191 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

9 December 2008

Śrī Mokṣadā Ekādaśī, 26 Keśava, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation 2,407

Highlights

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• COMPASSION

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

• A SIMPLE DEVOTEE CAN SPEAK WITH THE LORD

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

MEDITATION ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

Sripad Shankaracharya's Gīta-dhyāna

Translation and commentary by

His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Versification by Hayagriva Das Adhikari

(continued from the previous issue)

bhīṣma-droṇa-taṭā jayadratha-jalā gāndhāra-nīlotpalā

śalya-grāhavatī kṛpeṇa vahanī karṇena velākulā

aśvatthāma-vikarṇa-ghora-makarā

duryodhanāvartinī

sottīrṇā khalu pāṇḍavai raṇa-nadī

kaivartakaḥ keśavaḥ



Of that terrifying river

Of the battlefield of Kurukshetra

Over which the Pandavas victo-

riously crossed,

Bhishma and Drona were as the high banks,

Jayadratha as the river's water,

The King of Gandhara the blue water-lily,

Salya the shark,

Kripa the current,

Karna the mighty waves,

Ashvatthama and Vikarna the dread alligators,

And Duryodhan the very whirlpool —

But Thou, O Krishna, wast the ferryman!

(Text 6)

pārāśarya-vacaḥ sarojaṁ-amalaṁ gītārtha-gandhotkaṭaṁ

nānākhyānaka-kesaraṁ hari-kathā-sambodhanābodhitam

loke sajjana-ṣaṭ-padairaharahaḥ pepīyamānaṁ mudā

bhūyād-bhārata-parīkajam kali-mala-pradhvaṁsi naḥ śreyase

May the spotless lotus of the *Mahābhārata*

That grows on the waters

Of the words of Vyas

And of which the *Bhagavad-gītā*

Is the irresistibly sweet fragrance

And its tales of heroes

The full blown petals

Fully opened by the talk of Lord Hari,

Who destroys the sins

Of Kali-yuga,

And on which daily light

The nectar-seeking souls,

As so many bees

Swarming joyously —

May this lotus of the *Mahābhārata*

Bestow on us the highest good. (Text 7)

mūkaṁ karoti vācāṁ paṇḍurā laṅghayate girim

yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande paramānanda-mādhavam

Salutations to Lord Krishna

The embodiment of supreme bliss,

By whose grace and compassion

The dumb become eloquent

And the lame scale mountains —

Him I salute! (Text 8)

PURPORT: Foolish followers of foolish speculators cannot understand the meaning of offering salutations to Lord Krishna, the embodiment of bliss. Shankar himself offered his salutations to Lord Krishna so that some of his intelligent followers might understand the real fact by the example set by their great master Shankar, the incarnation of

Lord Shiva. But there are many obstinate followers of Shankar who refuse to offer their salutations to Lord Krishna, and instead mislead innocent persons by injecting materialism into the *Bhagavad-gītā* and confusing innocent readers by their commentaries. Consequently, the readers never have the opportunity to become blessed by offering salutations to Lord Krishna, the cause of all causes. The greatest disservice to humanity is to keep mankind in darkness about the science of Krishna or Krishna consciousness by distorting the sense of the *Gītā*.

*yam brahmā varuṇendra-rudra-marutaḥ stutxanti divyāḥ śatair
vedaiḥ sāṅga-pada-kramopaniṣadair gāyanti yam sāma-gāḥ
dhyānāvasthita-tad-gatena manasā paśyanti yam yogino
yasyāntarīṇaṁ na viduḥ surāsura-gaṇā devāya tasmai namaḥ*

Salutations to that supreme shining one
Whom the creator Brahma, Varuna,
Indra, Rudra, Marut and all divine beings
Praise with hymns,
Whose glories are sung
By the verses of the Vedas,
Of whom the singers of *Sāma* sing
And of whose glories the Upanishads
Proclaim in full choir,
Whom the yogis see
With their minds absorbed
In perfect meditation,
And of whom all the hosts
Of gods and demons
Know not the limitations.

To Him, the Supreme God Krishna, be all salutations —

Him we salute! Him we salute! Him we salute! (Text 9)

PURPORT: By recitation of the ninth verse of his meditation, quoted from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* [12.13.1], Shankar has indicated that Lord Krishna is worshipable by one and all, including himself. He gives hints to materialists, impersonalists, mental speculators, "void" philosophers and all other candidates subjected to the punishment of material miseries — just offer salutations to Lord Krishna, who is worshiped by Brahma, Shiva, Varuna, Indra and all other demigods. He has not mentioned, however, the name of Vishnu because Vishnu is identical with Krishna. The Vedas and the Upanishads are meant for understanding the process by which one can surrender unto Krishna. The yogis try to see him (Krishna) within themselves by meditation. In other words, it is for all the demigods and demons who do not know where the ultimate end is that Shankar

teaches, and he especially instructs the demons and the fools to offer salutations to Krishna and his words, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, by following in his footsteps. Only by such acts will the demons be benefited, not by misleading their innocent followers by so-called mental speculations or show-bottle meditations. Shankar directly of-

Nāma-tattva

THE ULTIMATE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE Śrīla Jīva Goswami's commentary On *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 6.3.22

*etāvān eva loke 'smin puṁsām dharmāḥ paraḥ smṛtaḥ
bhakti-yogo bhagavati tan-nāma-grahaṇādibhiḥ*

"Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society."

PURPORT: Here the word "*puṁsām*" means "of the living entities" and "*para dharmāḥ*" means "the religion of the entire world". There is no religion better than this. Then he describes the nature of this religion (*etāvān*). He says it is direct devotional service (*bhakti-yogaḥ*), which begins with recitation of the holy name of the Lord (*grahaṇādibhiḥ*). The word "*eva*" (indeed) here clearly indicates that it is different from any other kind of religion. If the activities of devotional service, beginning with reciting the Lord's holy name were meant to attain the same results attained by fruitive work and other similar paths, then devotional service would not be superior. When one is an offender he will use devotional service to attain these insignificant goals. That is the meaning. Therefore devotional service is not meant to give results that are temporary. This verse was spoken by Yamaraj to his soldiers. ❧

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fers salutations to Krishna as if to show the fools who are searching after light that here is light like the sun. But the fallen demons are like owls that will not open their eyes on account of their fear of the sunlight itself. These owls will never open their eyes to see the sublime light of Krishna and his words the *Bhagavad-gītā*. They will, however, comment on the *Gītā* with their closed owl-eyes to mislead their unfortunate readers and followers. Shankar, however, discloses the light to his less intelligent followers and shows that *Bhagavad-gītā* and Krishna are the only source of light. This is all to teach the sincere seekers of truth to offer salutation to Lord Krishna and thus surrender unto him without misgivings. That is the highest perfection of life, and that is the highest teaching of Shankar, the great learned scholar whose teachings drove the void-philosophy of Buddha out of India, the land of knowledge.

Om tat sat. ❧

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COMPASSION

*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode’s
Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*

When a person takes shelter of *bhakti*, mercy towards all living entities is a natural quality.* Compassion does not have a separate existence from *bhakti*. The quality which when offered to the Lord is called *bhakti* or *prema*, becomes friendship, compassion and indifference when directed towards other living beings. It is a feeling which is inherent in the eternal nature of the soul. In the spiritual realm this quality manifests only as friendship, but in the material world it manifests as friendship towards devotees, mercy towards the innocent, and indifference towards the offenders. These are but different aspects of the same compassion. In the conditioned state this compassion is extremely stunted. It starts with one’s own body, then widens to include one’s household, then one’s *varṇa*, then one’s countrymen. Expanding, it includes the human beings of the whole world. Compassion becomes complete when it is directed towards all living entities. Patriotism is but

an aspect of this sentiment in relation to one’s country. Philanthropy is compassion directed towards all humanity. The *vaiṣṇava* should not be limited by these sentiments. He is compassion for all living entities, not wanting to cause harm to any of them. ❧

* Bhaktivinode Thakur’s footnote:

*tasmāt sarveṣu bhūteṣu dayāṁ kuruta sauhrdam
bhāvam āsuram unmucya yayā tuṣyaty adhokṣajāḥ*

Therefore, my dear young friends born of demons, please act in such a way that the Supreme Lord, who is beyond the conception of material knowledge, will be satisfied. Give up your demoniac nature and act without enmity or duality. Show mercy to all living entities by enlightening them in devotional service, thus becoming their well-wishers. (*Bhāg.* 7.6.24)

A SIMPLE DEVOTEE

CAN SPEAK WITH THE LORD

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

A simple-hearted *vaiṣṇava sādhu* talks with the deity, and the deity talks with him. This is simplicity. Those who are crooked don’t understand. I will tell you a story in this regard. One gentleman had a Gopal deity in his house. He performed the worship, his wife cooked, and he offered the *bhoga* to the deity. He was a *bhakta*, *vaiṣṇava*, a devotee doing *bhajana*. He had only one son, who was about five years old. Once, some occasion arose and he had to go out of the house on some business. He was going to have to be absent for one or two days. Then who will offer *bhoga* to Gopal? He instructed his young son, “My dear boy, your mother will cook food for Gopal. She will arrange the plate, you take it and place it before our Gopal deity, offer your obeisances, chant “*hare kṛṣṇa*”, and tell Gopal, “My mother has cooked this food for you. My father is away, so I have brought this plate for you. Please eat it. Just say this simple thing.”

The child said, “Father, you utter some mantra and you ring a bell. But I don’t know any mantra.”

"No mantra is required", the father said. "You just say this simple thing. Just chant 'hare kṛṣṇa' and say, 'My mother has cooked this food for you, so I have brought you this plate. Please eat it.' Just say this thing. Then offer your obeisances and come out of the temple room. Leave the door open just a little. If Gopal needs something, some salt, some more *subji*, or something else, then you can give it to him. Just sit outside."

The simple child did exactly what his father told him to do. He brought the plate, placed it before Gopal, offered obeisances, chanted "hare kṛṣṇa", and said, "My father is absent. He has told me to do this thing. I brought this plate for you, Gopal. Please eat it." Then he went and sat outside. Very often he was looking in at the altar. He waited and waited, half an hour, then an hour. "Oh, Gopal is not eating, what is this?" He began talking to the deity, "Gopal, my father was giving, and you were eating. Now I am giving to you and you are not eating. What happened to you, you are not eating? I don't know any mantra and I didn't ring a bell, is that why you are

not eating, or is there some other reason? My father said that there was no need of a bell, and I should just say this thing. Why are you not eating? If you won't eat, then I won't get up from this place, I will just sit here. I will never get up unless you eat."

The simple child spoke in this way. Then Gopal ate everything. The whole plate was empty, finished. No food was left for the mother and son, so the two of them fasted that night, taking only a *tulasī* leaf and some water. "OK. Gopal gave us this." The next day, the father came, and said, "Why are you fasting? What happened?"

The son said, "I did what you told. At first, Gopal didn't eat, and I waited for half an hour, then one hour. Then I said, 'Gopal, why aren't you eating? My father was offering to you and you were eating. Now I am offering and you are not eating. If you won't eat, then I won't get up from this place, I will sit down here the whole night. Then Gopal ate everything and the plate was empty. There was no food for us, so we are fasting.'"

His father said, "No, no. Some rats must have eaten it. There must be some rats in the temple room."

The boy insisted, "No, no. Gopal ate it."

His father couldn't believe it. Finally, he said, "OK, today you offer in the same way as you did yesterday." Then the father hid himself in the temple room to see what was going on. Just as he did the day before, his son took the plate, placed it before Gopal, chanted "hare kṛṣṇa", offered *daṇḍavats*, and told Gopal, "You eat." Then he went outside and sat down. But Gopal was not eating. The boy waited half an hour. "Gopal, what happened to you? You ate yesterday, why are you not eating today?"

Then Gopal said, "Your father is hiding here, how can I eat?"

This is a true story. The child is simple. Simplicity is *vaiṣṇavism*. If you are a true, simple *sādhū*, *vaiṣṇava*, then you can talk with the Lord. ❀

— From a home program, 5 January 1995.

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir

National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 192 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

23 December 2008

Śrī Saphalā Ekādaśī, 11 Nārāyaṇa, 522 Gaurābda

Circulation 2,415

Highlights

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SEPARATION IS THE HIGHEST

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

In the *śāstra* it is said: *vr̥ndāvanam parityajya padam ekaṁ na gacchati* — "Krishna does not go even one step from Vrindavan." He is so much attached to Vrindavan. So how is it that we see that Krishna left Vrindavan and went so far away to Mathura and did not return for many years? No. Krishna actually did not leave Vrindavan. However, since Krishna left Vrindavan all the inhabitants were simply thinking of Krishna and crying. That was their business. Mother Yasoda, Nanda Maharaja, Radharani, all the *gopīs*, all the cows, all the calves, and all the cowherd boys — their only business was to think of Krishna and cry in separation.

Krishna can be felt, Krishna can be present more acutely in separation. That is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's teaching — to love Krishna in separation. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has written, *śūnyāyitan jagat sarvaṁ govinda-virahēṇa me* — "Everything is vacant without Govinda, without Krishna." That is the highest perfection. When we see that everything is nothing and only Krishna consciousness is there, that is the highest. That is the *gopīs*. Therefore the *gopīs* are so exalted. They could not forget Krishna for a single moment. When Krishna was going to the forest with his cows and calves, the *gopīs* at home were disturbed in their minds, "Oh, Krishna is walking

bare-footed. There are so many stones and nails. They will prick Krishna's lotus feet that are so soft that we think our breasts hard when Krishna puts his lotus feet on them." They are absorbed in these thoughts and crying. They are so anxious to see Krishna return home that in the evening they are standing on the roof watching, "Now Krishna is coming back with his cows and friends." This is Krishna consciousness. Krishna cannot be absent from a devotee when he is absorbed in thoughts of Krishna. This is the process of Krishna consciousness.

Kuntidevi was very anxious that Krishna will be absent. But when Krishna will be absent physically he will be more present within the mind of the devotee. So Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's teaching is *vipralambha-sevā*. He has shown this by his practical life. He was searching out Krishna. He was crying, tears were coming like torrents of rain from his eyes, and he was feeling everything vacant for want of Krishna. This is separation, *vipralambha*. There are two stages, *sambhoga* and *vipralambha*. When he is personally present, personally meeting, and personally embracing, that is called *sambhoga*. And when there is separation, that is called *vipralambha*. These are two ways that a devotee can be benefited. (Lecture in Los Angeles, 1 May 1973)

When Sri Krishna left Vrindavan and accepted the kingdom of Mathura, Srimati Radharani, out of ecstatic feelings of separation, expressed how Krishna can be loved in separation. Thus, devotional service in separation is central to this verse. Worship in separation is considered by the *Gauḍīya-madhva-sampradāya*

to be the topmost level of devotional service. According to this conception, the devotee thinks of himself as very poor and neglected by the Lord. Thus he addresses the Lord as *dīna-dayārdra-nātha*, as did Madhavendra Puri. Such an ecstatic feeling is the highest form of devotional service. Because Krishna had gone to Mathura, Srimati Radharani was very much affected, and She expressed herself thus, "My dear Lord, because of your separation my mind has become overly agitated. Now tell me, what can I do? I am very poor and you are very merciful, so kindly have compassion upon me and let me know when I shall see you." Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was always expressing the ecstatic emotions of Srimati Radharani that she exhibited when she saw Uddhava at Vrindavan. Similar feelings, experienced by Madhavendra Puri, are expressed in this verse. Therefore, *vaiṣṇavas* in the *Gauḍīya-madhva-sampradāya* say that the ecstatic

feelings experienced by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu during His appearance came from Sri Madhavendra Puri through Iswara Puri. All the devotees in the line of the *Gauḍīya-madhva-sampradāya* accept these principles of devotional service. (Purport to *Cc. madhya* 4.197)

A person who is advanced in Krishna consciousness always feels separation from Krishna because such a feeling of separation is superior to the feeling of meeting Krishna. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in his last twelve years of existence within this world at Jagannath Puri taught the people of the world how, with a feeling of separation, one can develop his dormant love of Krishna. Such feelings of separation or meeting with Krishna are different stages of love of Godhead. These feelings develop in time when a person seriously engages in devotional service. (*Cc. ādi* 13.39)

Nāma-tattva

THE ESOTERIC SECRET OF KRISHNA NAMA

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode
From *Jaiva Dharma*, chapter 23

Vijaya inquired, "Gurudeva, I understand that *harināma* is transcendental. However, to accept without a trace of doubt that *harināma* is in fact absolutely transcendental even though the names are composed of apparently material sounds and syllables, then I must first realize how this is so. Kindly enlighten me on this aspect."

Raghunath Das Babaji said, "The *Padma Purāṇa* states:

*nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto 'bhīmatō nāma-nāminoh*

Kṛṣṇa-nāma is transcendently blissful and bestows all spiritual benediction, for *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is Krishna himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is complete and the form of all transcendental *rasa*. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is not a material name under any condition and no less powerful than Krishna himself. Since *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is transcendental to any material quality, there is no question of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* being involved with *māyā*. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is always liberated and spiritual, never conditioned by the laws of material nature, because *kṛṣṇa-nāma* and Krishna himself are identical.

Vijaya said, "How can the sound vibration of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* be different from mundane sounds? How can it be supramundane?"

Raghunath Das Babaji replied, "*Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is not a product of this material universe. When the eternal spiritual spark, the *jīva*, attains his *svarūpa* in the transcendental realm, he is eligible to pronounce *śuddha-kṛṣṇa-nāma*. Now, in his present condition under the enslavement of *māyā* and covered with the gross material senses, the *jīva* is unqualified to utter *śuddha-kṛṣṇa-nāma*. Nonetheless, by the unconditional mercy of *hlādinī-sakti* Srimati Radharani, when the *svarūpa* of the purified *jīva* begins to emerge, then *śuddha-kṛṣṇa-nāma* automatically begins to manifest. Within the fertile field of purified consciousness, *śuddha-kṛṣṇa-nāma* appears and dances upon the devotionally enlivened tongue of the devotee by the infinite compassion of Sri Krishna himself. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* does not possess a mundane form in the shape of material sounds and syllables, but possesses a *sac-cidānanda* form of eternal transcendental bliss and knowledge. When *kṛṣṇa-nāma* gambols upon the tongue of the *śuddha-bhakta*, he may appear to be material sounds and syllables to those whose consciousness is covered by *māyā*, however he is always pure and transcendental. This is the esoteric mystery which surrounds *kṛṣṇa-nāma*."

— Adapted from the edition translated by Sri Sarvabhavana Das. Published by Brhat Mrdanga Press. Vrindavan. 2003.

The *gopīs* of Vrindavan were so attached to Krishna that they were not satisfied simply with the *rāsa* dance at night. They wanted to associate with him and enjoy his company during the daytime also. When Krishna went to the forest with his cowherd boyfriends and cows, the *gopīs* did not physically take part, but their hearts went with him. And because their hearts went, they were able to enjoy his company through strong feelings of separation. To acquire this strong feeling of separation is the teaching of Lord Chaitanya and his direct disciplic succession of *gosvāmīs*. When we are not in physical contact with Krishna we can associate with him like the *gopīs* through feelings of separation. Krishna's transcendental form, qualities, pastimes and entourage are all identical with him. There are nine different kinds of devotional service. Devotional service to Krishna in feelings of separation elevates the devotee to the highest perfectional level, to the level of the *gopīs*. (*Krishna Book*, chapter 35)

Those who are in the disciplic succession of the *Madhva-gauḍīya-sampradāya* should always feel separation from Krishna, worship his transcendental form, and discuss his transcendental teachings, his pastimes, his qualities, and his entourage. That will enrich the devotees to the highest devotional perfection. Feeling constant separation while engaged in the service of the Lord is the perfection of Krishna consciousness. (*Krishna Book*, chapter 35) ❧

INITIATION INTO SPIRITUAL LIFE

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta

Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Sri Sajjana-toshani, volume 26, number 7

December 1928

The ceremony of *dīkṣa*, initiation, is that by which the spiritual preceptor admits one to the status of a neophyte on the path of spiritual endeavor. The ceremony tends to confer spiritual enlightenment by abrogating sinfulness. Its actual effect depends on the degree of willing co-operation on the part of the disciple and is, therefore, not the same in all cases. It does not preclude the possibility of reversion of the novice to the non-spiritual state if he slackens in his effort or misbehaves. Initiation puts a person on the true track and also imparts an initial impulse to go ahead. It cannot, however, keep one going for good unless one chooses to put forth his own voluntary effort. The nature of the initial impulse also varies in accordance with the condition of the recipient. But although the mercy of the good preceptor enables

us to have a glimpse of the absolute and of the path of attainment of the absolute, the seed that is thus sown requires very careful tending under the direction of the preceptor if it is to germinate and grow into a fruit-and-shade-giving tree. Unless the soul of its own accord chooses to serve Krishna after obtaining a working idea of his real nature, it cannot long retain the spiritual vision. The soul is never compelled by Krishna to serve him.

But initiation is never altogether futile. It changes the outlook of the disciple on life. If he sins after initiation he may fall into even greater depths of degradation than the uninitiated, but although after initiation temporary setbacks may occur, they do not ordinarily prevent final deliverance. The faintest glimmering of real knowledge of the absolute has not only sufficient power to change radically and for good the whole of our mental and physical constitution, but this glimmering is also incapable of being totally extinguished except in extraordinarily unfortunate cases.

It is undoubtedly practicable for the initiated, if only he is willing, to follow the directions of the preceptor and thus progress by slow degrees to the absolute. The good preceptor is verily the savior of fallen souls. However, it is very rare in modern culture that a person feels inclined to submit to the guidance of another, especially in spiritual matters. Yet the very same person submits readily enough to the direction of a physician for being cured of his bodily ailments, because these latter cannot be ignored without consequences that are obvious to everyone. The evil that results from our neglect of the ailments of the soul is of a nature that paralyzes and deludes our understanding and thus prevents us from recognizing it. Its gravity is not recognized as it does not stand in the way of our worldly activities as clearly as bodily ailments do. The average cultured man therefore feels himself at liberty to ask questions such as the following without realizing the urgent necessity of submitting to the treatment of spiritual maladies at the hands of a really competent physician: "Why should it be at all necessary to submit to any particular person, or to subscribe to any particular ceremony, for the purpose of realizing the absolute, who by his nature is unconditioned?" "Why should Krishna require our formal declaration of submission to himself?" "Would it not be more generous and logical to permit us to live a life of freedom in accordance with the principles of our perverted nature which is also his creation?" "Admitting that it is our duty to serve Krishna, why should we have to be introduced to him by a third party?" "Why is it impossible for one to serve Sri Krishna directly?"

It would no doubt be highly convenient and helpful to be instructed by a good preceptor who is well-versed in the scriptures to understand the same. However, we should never submit to someone to the extent that might give a rascal the opportunity to do us harm. The bad preceptor is a familiar character. It is inexplicable how those gurus who live in open sin nevertheless manage to command unquestioning allegiance of the cultured persons among their disciples. Such being the case, can we blame anyone who hesitates to submit unconditionally to a preceptor, regardless of whether he is good or bad? It is of course necessary to be quite sure of the bona fides of a person before we even tentatively accept him as our spiritual guide. A preceptor should be a person who appears likely to possess those qualities that will enable him to improve our spiritual condition.

Those and similar thoughts are likely to occur to most persons who have received an English education when they are asked to accept the help of any particular person as spiritual preceptor. The literature, science, and art of the West advocate the principle of the liberty of the individual and denounce the mentality that leads one to surrender to someone regardless of how superior they are. They inculcate the necessity and value of having faith in oneself.

But the good preceptor claims our sincere and complete allegiance. The good disciple makes a complete surrender of himself at the feet of the preceptor. But the

submission of the good disciple is neither irrational nor blind. It is offered on the condition that the preceptor continues to be altogether good. The disciple retains the right of renouncing his allegiance to the preceptor the moment he is satisfied that the preceptor is a fallible creature like himself. Nor does a good preceptor accept anyone as his disciple unless the latter is prepared to submit to him freely. A good preceptor is duty bound to renounce a disciple who is not sincerely willing to follow his instructions fully. If a preceptor accepts as his disciple one who refuses to be wholly guided by him, or if a disciple submits to a preceptor who is not wholly good, such preceptor and such disciple are both doomed to fall from their spiritual state.

No one is a good preceptor who has not realized the absolute. One who has realized the absolute is saved from the necessity of walking on the worldly path. The good preceptor who lives the spiritual life is, therefore, bound to be wholly good. He should be wholly free from any desire for anything of this world, whether good or bad. The categories of good and bad do not exist in the absolute. In the absolute, everything is good. We can have no idea in our present state of this absolute goodness. Submission to the absolute is not real unless it is also itself absolute. It is on the plane of the absolute that the disciple is required to submit completely to the good preceptor. On the material plane there can be no such thing as complete submission. The pretence of complete submission to the bad preceptor is responsible for the corruptions that are found in the relationship of the ordinary worldly guru and his equally worldly-minded disciples.

All honest thinkers will realize the logical propriety of the position set forth above. But most persons will be disposed to believe that a good preceptor in the above sense may not be found in this world. This is really so. Both the good preceptor and his disciple belong to the spiritual realm. But spiritual discipleship is nevertheless capable of being realized by persons who belong to this world. Otherwise there would be no religion at all in the world. But because spiritual life can be realized in this world, it does not follow that the worldly existence is capable of being improved into the spiritual. As a matter of fact, the one is perfectly incompatible with the other. They are categorically different from one another. Although the good preceptor appears to belong to this world, he is not really of this world. No one who belongs to this world can deliver us from worldliness. The good preceptor is a denizen of the spiritual world who has been enabled by the will of God to appear in this world in order to enable us to realize the spiritual existence. ❀

(To be concluded in the next issue)

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

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